JOTTINGS FROM A FARNBOROUGH NOTE BOOK

A Story of an Old World Village

BY JESSIE CHALLACOMBE

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The Porch of the Old Parish Church.

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DEDICATED TO MY HUSBAND AND MY SON

FOREWORD

In writing the following chapters I have received much help from "The History of Farnborough," by the Rev. A. E. Kinch, formerly rector of this parish, and also from various private notebooks of his, kindly lent to me by his sister, Mrs. Horniblow.

For such assistance, and also for the very many happy interviews which so many of the parishioners have granted me, I wish to express my most grateful thanks.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION.

Most country villages have their local interests, but very few of them possess a longer or more interesting history than the village of Farnborough in Hampshire can claim.

Mention of this village is made in the Domesday Book (1086), when Farnborough went by the pretty name of "Ferneberga" (Fern Hill), a name much more musical to the ear than the present "Farnbro'," as we hear it pronounced to-day on the platform when the train enters the station.

Indeed, its history goes back further than that time, for it is most probable that Farnborough was included in King Alfred's will as part of the land which he left to his nephew, Ethelm, in 901. This land in 951 passed into the hands of Bishop Aelfsige, who was then Bishop of Winchester.

These facts go to prove that the little village of Farnborough rightly claims to have its story told and its history remembered.

Farnborough people seem always to have prided themselves on their steadfastness to old principles.

It was no place to encourage changes. "What had been must be" was the unspoken rule of action in the place, loyally upheld, and passed down from one generation to another in these parts.

They were good old times of simple living, simple faith and simple pleasures.

The result of this manner of living meant that Farnborough life and customs of sixty or seventy years ago still showed many links with its more ancient history. It is of the Farnborough ways and doings of that time that these chapters chiefly tell.

Farnborough was then a small village, mostly contained in Farnborough Street. It was in the postal district of Bagshot. It was a mere speck in the midst of a vast heath, with a turnpike road running through the village. The people in those days travelled in coaches. There were no trains or motor-cars or lorries: horses, bullocks and dogs did all the work of conveyance, and traffic of every sort was carried on at a leisurely pace. Mail-coaches had been introduced in 1784, to the delight of villagers, so that seventy years ago these had been of some long standing. Stage waggons were sometimes drawn by as many as eight horses.

Thirty-four mile-stones marked the distance from Farnborough to London. The points from which they were measured have changed since then. "The Borough" gave place to the "Elephant and Castle," whilst this was again changed in 1821 to the "White Bear," Piccadilly. Now the London terminus is Charing Cross.

Seventy years ago there was nothing so modern as Victoria Road, Alexandra Road, or The Parade in the village: nor were they wanted. "Turnpike Road" was good enough for Farnborough folks, and skirted the western side of Farnborough Park. It was the high road from Winchester to London, whilst the road from Guildford to Reading ran through Farnborough Street.

According to Church records, in 1851 the population of Farnborough then numbered 477. A few years later great changes took place. Owing to the formation of the Aldershot Camp in 1854 the population then rapidly increased, particularly on the south side of the parish. From that time until the present year (1922), although the parish has now been divided into North and South Farnborough, the population in both districts has steadily gone on increasing, whilst the old rule "What has been must be" has given place to an entirely new order of things, and changes of every kind have been introduced.

There are still left in the Mother Parish, however, some who can remember "the good old times" of sixty or seventy years ago. From them most of the incidents of those times which are mentioned in this little book have been gathered, and the purpose in making them public property is that the old manners and customs of the people of Farnborough may not be forgotten.

The story is very incomplete, and very imperfectly told, but it will have achieved its object if it proves that the good old times were days of honest living, simple faith and homely joys; and more rest-giving to body, soul and spirit than the hurrying life and bustle of the present day.

With these few words by way of introduction and apology, it may be well to proceed with the story of Farnborough Findings and Folklore.

Chapter II

FARNBOROUGH CHURCH.

Notwithstanding the many changes which Farnborough Parish Church has undergone since early times, there still remains a good deal of ancient date in the sacred building which is very interesting.

It is a strange fact, but the dedication of the church is somewhat uncertain. Some say it was called "All Saints'," some say "St. Peter's," but not a very long time ago a will was found belonging to an old gentleman who lived at Bramshill, in which the church is spoken of as "the Church of our Blessed Lady in Farnbrowe," from which we may gather that it was originally dedicated to St. Mary, as the date of this will is 1537.

The present church probably stands on or near the site of a still older church, which was built in Anglo-Saxon times. Be that as it may, there are not many parishes in England that possess, as Farnborough does, a church which is known to have been built somewhere about 1200, and a record of the names of an unbroken succession of Rectors since 1290. It is to be regretted that so little is known concerning those old-time Rectors of Farnborough. The record starts with a gentleman named Stephen de Chertsey, whose patron was John de Farenbergh. In 1378 there must have been considerable trouble in the parish. The Rev. Thomas de Kingesbury was the rector then. In Bishop Wykeham's Register a commission is issued in 1378 from Wolvesey to the Chaplain of Yateley to absolve from excommunication one of the parishioners who had laid violent

hands on the Chaplain of Farnborough. The latter was apparitor-general to the Bishop, and was killed in the execution of his duty. From this entry we may gather that the Rev. Thomas de Kingesbury came to an untimely end.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Gloudy. John de Cheigny was the patron of the living at that time, and the Rev. Richard Gloudy had twelve months' leave of absence from the parish granted to him in order that he might be in attendance upon his patron's family during their travels, so he was a more fortunate man than his predecessor. He must have been a very old man when his tenure of office ceased, as he was rector here from 1378 till 1453, John Twychener acting as his curate.

Farnborough Church to-day is in size like a small cathedral compared with its size in the days of the Rev. Stephen de Chertsey. Then it was a very diminutive building, rather longer than it was wide. The present north door may have been used in that church. It is made of very solid oak, with such strong bolts and bars that it will need the wear of many centuries yet to destroy them. It adds sentiment to this doorway when it is remembered how many generations of Farnborough folk have entered the little church by way of this entrance.

In early times there was also a south door, but there was no tower, no porch, no transepts, and only a very small chancel. The chancel then stood just east of the screen, and was scarcely more than a recess, just large enough to contain the altar.

In those days there was a window at the west end of the church, where now we find the doorway which leads from the tower into the west gallery.

The saints of old who were in the habit of worshipping in Farnborough Church thought of tired legs and of weary bodies, as well as of the need of reverence in not running hastily into God's presence; therefore, some time in the 13th century,

they placed at the entrance to the church that beautiful porch of oak or chestnut, which remains almost intact to-day, with its benches so broad and solid, that all the centuries of wear and weather have told but little upon them. The carving of the woodwork above the benches has suffered slightly, but that is not to be wondered at as the carving is of rather fine workmanship, and is more ornamental than anything else that is to be found in the church unless it be the stonework carving of the arches above the north doorway, which have fine dog-tooth decoration. Those devout people who put up the porch forgot to measure first the stone archway against which the porch stands, as may be noticed by its misfit with the stonework. Evidently such an unimportant thing as a misfit did not trouble the minds of the Farnborough folk in the 13th century.

In the 17th century a great many alterations were made in the interior of the church, and it was considerably enlarged. The tower was added, also the gallery. A chancel was added beyond the original east end of the church, and the space between the screen and chancel step became the lord's aisle, with seats reserved in it for the Lord of the manor and his retinue. It was at this time that the beautiful Jacobean screen was placed in the church. In those early days it had high gates, by which the lord's aisle could be entirely separated from the nave. At a somewhat later date a superscreen was added, but this was removed in 1886, when the plaster ceiling of the church was also removed, and the beautiful timber roof was exposed to view.

Later on other changes were made. The high-backed pews, with their closely-shutting doors, were then considered old-fashioned and out of date by some of the newcomers to Farnborough, and perhaps, also, they were getting a little worm-eaten and worn. So the church was then re-seated,

Interior of Church, showing Screen.

whilst the wood of the old pews was used for panelling the west end of the church.

When the men were engaged in the work of panelling the walls a very interesting discovery was made—under many coatings of whitewash—on the north wall: three ancient frescoes were uncovered. They were found to be the pictures of three saints; S. Mary Magdalene, S. Agnes and S. Eugenia. Quite near to these frescoes was discovered a Consecration Cross, which probably was of still earlier date than the paintings. This mark in early days the Bishop generally placed on a sacred building when he consecrated it. The frescoes are supposed to have been painted about 1300, but who was the artist nobody knows. It is thought they may have been the work of one of the early Rectors of Farnborough, who probably intended to decorate the whole church in the same manner. It is a question of opinion whether it is to be regretted that he did not complete his task, for it is their age more than their beauty which makes these paintings so priceless to Farnborough people. Visitors come from far to look at them. Unfortunately, when they were covered up by the whitewash, pegs were driven into the walls, apparently for the men to hang their hats upon. The marks of these pegholes still remain, as well as the frescoes, and as there is one just above the halo of each of the saints these marks have not increased the beauty of the pictures, nor do they seem quite in keeping with their surroundings.

The woodwork of the pulpit and gallery, as well as of the screen, is of Jacobean date. They are all of much the same design, very plain, solid and substantial. The strangely-shaped pillars which support the gallery are well deserving of notice. Till alterations were again made in the church in 1886 the pulpit stood on the south side of the church, with a reading desk and a seat for the clerk attached to it. In those days there was a sounding-board

above the pulpit, but it was considered to lessen instead of increase the sound, so it was not very serviceable, and was removed at the same time as the super-screen.

In former times the office of parish clerk was held to be a very important post in Farnborough. Occupying his dignified position in the three-decker, both the parson and the people were much dependent upon the services of the clerk, as can be imagined by the following incident: —

In those days (1850) the singing in the church was led by a small band. The musicians sat in the gallery, and funny doings used to go on up there in connection with that band. Mr. Brown was then the bandmaster; Larkaby was the name of the clerk at that time. He sat in state in his black gown at the bottom desk of the three-decker. When the parson got to the end of the third collect, Mr. Larkaby would get up and put the question to the bandmaster in the gallery, with his hand to his mouth to make it more impressive, " Any singing to-day, Mr. Brown? "

Mr. Brown would turn round and look at his band, and reply accordingly, " No, Mr. Larkaby, bain't hands enough," or he would say, " Yes, Mr. Larkaby."

Then Mr. Larkaby would turn up his eyes towards the parson in the reading-desk above him and say, " You can go on," and a psalm or a hymn would be given out and sung.

On one of these occasions when the question was put to Mr. Brown, on looking round him he said " Yes " to there being enough hands, but added in despair, " But I've lost my book! " And pointing into the body of the church below him he said, " There un lies! " Mr. Larkaby left his desk and marched down the aisle in his black gown. Seizing a book, he said, " Be thickee? " Mr. Brown answered, " Ee be; chuck un up," and up was tossed

the book to the gallery, whilst Mr. Larkaby went back to his desk, muttering "Well caught," and, addressing the parson, said, "You can go on," and the parson said, "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, Psalm. . . . ."

After this strange proceeding it was decided by the Rector to put Mr. Taylor and his school children in the gallery to lead the singing, and a barrel organ was substituted for Mr. Brown's musical instruments. The gallery was re-seated, and the barrel organ was placed there. After that it lay with the parson to choose only two hymns for any one service, as the number of tunes on the organ was so limited. The Advent hymn tune was constantly in use. With Mr. Larkaby's successor the old custom which had given the parish clerk the right to say the "Amens" solemnly, and alone, passed with him. The Rector, Mr. Clayton, made an oaken cross to stand over Thomas Watts' grave, and under his name carved Psalm cxcvi. verse 46. People could look it up if they liked, but the Rector had agreed with Mr. Greene that in future "all the people should say 'Amen.'"

Later the wooden cross was displaced by a stone one.

In 1886 the 17th century chancel had to give place to the present one. In spite of the walls having been strengthened by buttresses, it was then condemned as being unsafe. It was in a shocking condition; ivy was growing through the walls inside the church; so it was entirely pulled down, and in its place the present beautiful chancel, reredos and the east window were erected by the generosity of Mr. W. Sherwin. The reredos is considered a fine piece of work. It is composed of Caen stone in three panels. In the centre is a beautiful cross of Mexican onyx, with bosses of Derbyshire spar, set on a background of Sienna marble, and framed in a vesica of alabaster. The cross shows wonderful pink colouring

when the sunlight falls upon it. In the left-hand panel the Call of S. Peter is depicted; in the panel on the right the Apostle is receiving his Commission. The panels are separated by columns of Irish marble, of which material the retable is made. The altar-book rest was given by the Rev. Horace Clayton in memory of his father. In the chancel there are windows to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Longman; General Sir Thomas McMahon and Sir Aubrey McMahon; Edwin Nichols; and Elizabeth Frances Annette Pidcock-Henzell; all from the studio of C. E. Kempe. There are also memorials to the Rev. Arthur Edoe Kinch, M.A., a former Rector and first Rural Dean of Aldershot; and his mother, Mary Kinch.

The barrel-organ had been replaced by a harmonium, so the hymn tunes were now more varied, and the service became more musical. The harmonium gave place to the present organ in 1893; it was first used on Christmas Day in that year. At first it stood in a small recess about four feet deep, as the north transept was not built till later. The organ cost £290. This money was raised chiefly by public subscription. Mr. John Bridger was the first organist.

In 1901 changes once more took place in the church. The population of Farnborough was increasing so rapidly that the church had again to be enlarged. The transepts and the south aisle were then added to the church. This gave more seating accommodation, but the extension did not improve the architectural beauty of the building in the eyes of those who were so fond of the old church. On the south side before the extension there were two doors, one Norman—the main south entrance—and the priest's door, which was Tudor in style. The stonework of these doorways has been cleverly inserted into the new work, and they are links with the past of great interest. The stonework of the

window in the east wall of the south transept is also early English work, preserved from the old south wall.

Before the transepts were built, the memorial tablets were affixed to the north and south walls of the lord's aisle. They were removed to their present places when these alterations were made. They do not date back a great way. Several of them are in praise of the virtues possessed by the Wilmot family, of Farnborough Place. There is one sacred to the memory of Anna, wife of Ludovick Grant, Esq., of Farnborough Hill. She must have been a very delightful lady if the words on that monument depict her character truly. She was apparently fond of her garden.

"Gone is the beauty of that modest flow'r,
So sweet, so lovely in its vernal bloom.
The noontide sun hath drunk the morning show'r
And death hath plucked it, to adorn the tomb.
Transplanted hence to Eden's blissful soil,
Its form shall brighten, and its bloom revive,
Nurtured by Him whom blights can ne'er despoil,
The flower now withered shall for ever live.
So she whose soul hath left this frail abode
Shall rise immortal, summon'd by her God."

There is one sacred to the memory of Ann Brook, aged fifty years, thirty-three of which she lived in General Grant's family, "a worthy and faithful servant," and below this piece of information are just five little words which seem to tell so much about Ann Brook: "Kind and gentle is she." Cannot we picture Ann Brook going about her "trivial round" and doing her daily "common task" so quietly and so well, a beautiful example for all the other Farnborough maids to copy?

Mrs. Caroline Morris seems to have been a wonderful woman, too, judging from her epitaph: —

"Her exemplary mien, as a sister, daughter, and friend, with every social virtue, and amiable quality

of the mind, endeared her through life to all who knew her, and will be cherished in the memory of her sorrowing friends."

There is one tablet eulogizing Ellen Busby "the faithful servant and affectionate friend to three generations of the Morant family." She died March 22nd, 1849, aged 73.

The crypt under the church was closed in 1858. Many of those who lived at Farnborough Place lie resting there. Amongst them are five of the six Earls of Anglesey, with six other members of their family: also many others connected with the Park. The body of George Morant, Esq., was the last to be interred beneath the church. Special permission for this had to be obtained. He died December 17th, 1875, aged 84. A memorial brass sacred to his memory was placed in the church by his surviving children: "In affectionate remembrance of the kindest of fathers."

The tower of the church is a strange-looking erection. It is constructed by four massive posts, cut from huge oaks, which are held together by strong tie-beams. These timbers may originally have formed part of our victorious wooden ships, which we sing of as "Hearts of Oak." In former days the roof of the tower was shingled; it now possesses a slate roof, with a rather weather-beaten cross surmounting it. The tower contains five bells, four of which are of ancient date. The oldest and heaviest bears this inscription:—"Henry Knight (of Reading) made mee: 1619." The other three are dated and inscribed respectively:—"1633 Prayes the Lord"; "Love God, 1638"; "Gulielmus Eldridge (William Eldridge of Chertsey) fecit 1699. G.E." In the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee the fifth bell was added, with the inscription: "Fear God, and Honour the Queen, 1887." What a great deal of interest those bells must have aroused in the district in olden days, when first one, then two, then three,

then four were sounded! They must have given the Farnborough folk of the 17th century something to talk about when they opened their cottage doors at night and listened to the sweet music of the bells coming forth from the old church tower across the wild heath land. The bellringers of those days had good cause to be proud of the position they held in the parish. Sometimes, however, the bellringers did not appear. On one occasion a bellringer named Brooker was in the belfry alone. No one had come to assist him, but Brooker was a quick-witted kind of man, and he was not going to be prevented from doing his duty if he could help it, so he fetched his wife to lend a hand. Poor Mrs. Brooker mismanaged her rope, and soon found herself standing on her head in the belfry tower, and had it not been for the presence of the Rector there might have been a serious accident.

The lower part of the tower is now used as a choir vestry. On the west wall a large board hangs, on which are described the various benefactions which have belonged to the church. There are also some interesting photographs there of the church as it used to be when the roof was ceiled and the old Jacobean pulpit, with its canopy, stood in the south-east corner of the nave. There is a very ancient oak door leading into the tower, which may be older than the tower, to judge from its appearance.

There were differences of opinion in bygone days in Farnborough as there have been in most parishes. Any change in the manner of conducting the service always met with opposition. Although it was the custom for the congregation to turn to the west when the band or barrel-organ music commenced, there was a great deal of opposition when the Rector suggested that all the congregation should turn to the east when they recited the Creed. "It had never been done in Farnborough," that was reason

sufficient, in their opinion, that it never should be done.

There wao a good deal of disturbance when an evening service on Sunday was suggested. "It had never been so in Farnborough," and the whole village had then to be canvassed before this change could be decided upon.

The seats in the church, according to the plainly printed card which hangs in the porch, are all "free and unappropriated," but there is an unwritten law in Farnborough still by which many of the regular church-goers keep their own seats, and they feel the loss of a pleasant privilege when they have to yield to strangers. In fact, in olden times it was part of the sexton's work to remove strangers to other seats if they made this mistake, and naturally it sometimes gave offence.

Nothing seems to be known about the date or history of the font.

There is much interesting information and amusing matter in the Registers, which date from the year 1584. The Communion plate is not ancient, as, unfortunately, when the present beautiful vessels were made the old chalice or cup was sold. An old oak muniment chest, with its three locks, was discovered recently in the tower.

1. One of the "Wooden" Stones. 2. The Porch.
3. Tombstone of Mr. John Shorter.

Chapter III

THE CHURCHYARD.

There is a great deal to be found in and around the old Churchyard that will interest those who care to look for it.

Antiquarians tell us that many hundreds of years before Farnborough Parish Church was built that mound on which the church now stands was used as a "barrow" or "tumulus." Tumuli were big mounds which marked the spot where the Anglo-Saxons buried their dead, and there are several in this neighbourhood. If this be so, then this seems to add interest to the sacredness of our churchyard and another link with the past. Maybe those small mounds which it is our custom to-day to raise above the graves of our dead were originally the outcome of this ancient Anglo-Saxon custom. The summit of that green hill was certainly a sweet spot for those old Saxon warriors to have selected for their burying ground, and it is a real garden of sleep for those Farnborough folk who have been laid to rest there in later years. Unfortunately the churchyard is now closed as a burying ground. This took place in 1859, much to the regret of the Farnborough people: it was made necessary as a result of the Crimean War.

The wounded men at that time were brought to Southampton, and from thence to Farnborough Station. They were then taken to North Camp, where they were placed in tents. Funerals in those days became as common as three a day, and they all took place in Farnborough Churchyard. It was certainly a place of peace to which to bring those

brave fallen soldiers, but the churchyard soon became full of graves, and this was the cause of its being closed so soon. Sometimes whilst one band and firing party ascended the hill playing the Dead March you would hear the band of a former funeral party going back to camp playing "The Girl I left behind me."

On one occasion the corporal in charge of the firing party left outside the church whilst the service was conducted, deliberately cut off the top of the yew tree growing on the north side of the tower with his cane, which rather annoyed the village people, but that tree has now got many heads, so the corporal may be forgiven.

Seventy years ago, as springtime came round, the churchyard was a wonderful place for white violets, as well as for daisies. Every grave was covered with them. The more the turf was turned the thicker they seemed to grow. You could quite smell the scent of the violets as you came near the churchyard. There are very few to be found there now, however, and there is only one explanation of the fact. In the good old days, when Mr. Gates, Bob Mason, Mr. Chorlton and others had by turns the charge of the churchyard they clipped the grass gently and kindly with shears, but when a sharp mowing machine, with unpleasant smelling oil, and such-like new-fangled instruments were provided by the churchwardens for the sexton's use, the violets naturally did not like it, so they slipped quietly away one by one, leaving the grass and the daisies to grow there alone.

But if the violets have ceased to bloom there the birds still remain and abound in the quiet churchyard as they ever did, and they still sing their songs in that sacred ground as sweetly as ever. Thrushes and robins seem especially to love that holy place. Maybe these birds have passed on from one generation to another, and can go back in their

family pedigree to the times of the Anglo-Saxons too. There is nothing to prove that this may not be so, and it is rather nice to think that it is.

Seventy years ago there were more names marking the graves than are to be found in the churchyard now. The stone used in these parts is not hard-wearing, and in the winter the wind blows fiercely on the top of the hill, so that the stone soon becomes worn and discoloured, and the "wooden stones," as the people always described the wooden monuments which those put up who could not afford stone ones, never had long wear in them. Mr. Lunn's, a native of Cove, was the last wooden stone to fall to pieces, and had to be cleared away a short time ago. Only three remain: they stand in a sheltered corner behind the chancel, so they have lasted longer than most. They are placed there in memory of Bob Mason and his family. Besides being sexton, we may conclude Bob also had a happy home, if the words on the "wooden stone" above Mrs. Bob Mason's grave speak truly. They run as follows:—

> "A loving wife, a mother dear,
> A faithful friend, lies buried here,
> Who lived in love, and died in peace:
> I hope her joys will never cease."

But wind, weather, and workmanship together account for the lack of very old gravestones in the churchyard and for the indistinct wording of those that do remain.

Near to the south transept door there are two gravestones still remaining which are not inclined to raise the onlooker's spirits considering the hopeless subjects that are carved upon them. The first one is in memory of Mrs. Ann Shorter, died March 3rd, 1767, aged 83. This stone has carved upon it a skull and an hour-glass, encircled by a serpent—the symbol of eternity. Mrs. Ann Shorter must have been a charitably disposed lady, for it is recorded of

her in the churchwarden's accounts that she gave twenty shillings to the parish in 1763 to be spent upon bread for the poor of Farnborough.

Adjoining her grave is the grave of Mr. John Shorter. The tombstone erected in memory of this gentleman is more gruesome than the one in memory of his wife. Mr. John Shorter died February 7th, 1763, aged 88. On his gravestone is carved a coffin, the lid of which is open and reveals a skeleton within. The coffin has above it the carving of a skull. On the stone there is the following poem:—

> "Strangely, my soul, art thou arrayed
> By the great sacred Three;
> In sweetest harmony of praise
> Let all thy powers agree."

We are not told the name of the poet who composed this verse. Maybe it was a young Master Shorter.

Near to the old porch are the four graves of the Clayton family. Mr. Clayton was Rector of Farnborough from 1839 till 1862, and he and his family were much beloved by all who knew them. A small memorial cross is placed above the grave of their infant son, with these words on it: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." And here it may be of interest to mention the fact that Miss Fanny Humphrys, better known as Mrs. Alexander, wife of the Bishop of Derry, was a cousin of the Rector's, and was in the habit of frequently staying at Farnborough Rectory in those days. Mr. Clayton had nine children. Miss Humphrys was godmother to two of his sons. She was a great hymn-writer. The hymns were called "Hymns for little Children," and most of them were written at the Rectory. Among her poems is that well-known hymn for children, "There is a green hill far away." It was probably the green hill that was the approach to the churchyard which suggested these words to her,

whilst the death of her little godson who lies buried near the porch was the occasion for her to write that other well-known children's hymn, "Within the churchyard side by side."

Many other Rectors of Farnborough besides Mr. Clayton have no doubt been laid to rest in the churchyard. There are two old gravestones leaning against the chancel wall which tell of two of them. The wording is very indistinct, but one of them is in memory of the Rev. John Richards, "Died 1825, seventeen years Rector of Farnborough."

The name is worn away on the other gravestone, but whoever he was it says he was Rector of this parish for thirty-two years, so it may have been placed in the churchyard in memory of the Rev. Henry Delafont. He came to Farnborough in 1747, and remained there till 1778.

There is a vault near the tower. Farmer Calloway, who had owned Coombe Farm, was the last to be buried there.

Seventy years ago a funeral in Farnborough was a very different event from a funeral as we see it in the village to-day. There was no hearse used then, but a hand-bier was used instead, on which the coffin was carried from the house of mourning to the churchyard. If a funeral came from Hawley or the outskirts of the village it meant a long walk, and the need for many bearers. There is still remaining in a shed at the present cemetery the hand-bier that was specially provided for Mr. Longman's funeral, one of the few relics of the past which remains to the parish.

No one visits Farnborough Churchyard without first noticing the two big flat stones which lie just outside the churchyard gate. There have been many different opinions with regard to those two stones, whence they came and for what purpose they were placed there. Nowadays they make a favourite seat on a summer's evening for Farnborough lads and

lasses to whisper their love songs upon, and it is not to be wondered at, for nowhere can you obtain a finer view of a glorious Farnborough sunset than on the top of that green hill, and it is, indeed, a peaceful spot for love's young dreams. But those two big stones certainly were not placed there originally for that object. Some people have said they were placed there as mounting stones for those who used to ride to church, some have thought they were placed there as a rough rest on which the coffins were deposited before bearing them into the churchyard; whilst some have suggested that they formed the steps leading to the churchyard in days long gone. Another much more scientific explanation for their presence has also been given, which may be interesting to those who understand geology. It is said that the Eskar, comprised in Farnborough Hill, the hill on which stands the Mausoleum, and which ends with the hill on which stands the church, was evidently formed by ice-berg groundings, and some few big stones were then distributed in the neighbourhood, notably the ones here spoken of and one at Frimley. Many small ones have also been found about the moors and camp, often highly indented, and all much water-worn. But although this explanation sounds very clever, it does not seem to clear the subject very satisfactorily. There is yet another explanation for their presence which has been suggested, and seems rather a likely solution of the mystery. May not those two flat stones be remains of Anglo-Saxon times? When they used that hill as a tumulus, is it not probable that those stones were used by our forefathers for offering up their old heathen sacrifices upon, as near to the tumulus as possible? Not very long ago, when they were digging in the neighbourhood, stones something of the same kind and pattern were discovered near Cockadobby Hill, where another tumulus is supposed to be. This explanation seems

more easy to understand than the story of the Eskar, and if it should be correct then those two flat stones make another link that Farnborough possesses with Saxon times.

There is yet another object of interest to be noticed in the churchyard, and that is the old yew tree, which stands near the priest's door on the south side of the church. A low brick wall surrounded the churchyard, but there was a private entrance opposite the front door of the Manor House. By this the Lord of the Manor and his household came to church. They had to pass the yew tree e'er they entered the sacred building by the south door. Many Farnborough folk can still remember this procession; it made an imposing sight for the rest of the congregation as they made their way to the lord's aisle, where special seats were reserved for them.

The yew tree begins to look rather aged now, and has fared badly, through exposure to wind and weather. It is not known for certain when it was planted, but it is said the age of a yew tree may be judged by the measure of its girth. If this is so, it is probably about 290 years old at the present time.

It is near to the yew tree that Old Six-o'clock and Dame Phœbe Maynard were buried, though no stones mark their graves. Near to them Mrs. Compton and her three little ones were the last to be laid to rest in the old churchyard. Mrs. Compton died of consumption. Her husband, Mr. Compton, long outlived her. He drove the first village public conveyance, called in those days a "fly." Fly-driving was a very precarious living, even though there were no taxi-cabs to compete with in those days. The large and strange-looking mound opposite the north porch marks the resting place of Master Cooke and Dame Ann Cooke.

If you wander round the churchyard, no doubt you will find other objects to interest you. The lychgate is modern compared with its surroundings. It was

a beautiful addition to the churchyard. We hope it will weather the storms as bravely as the ancient porch has done. The lychgate benches make welcome resting places during the summer months for those who have travelled to the top of the hill. As they look at the cross o'ershadowing them, it must remind them that they are on holy ground, whilst the beautiful inscription, "Until the day dawns and the shadows flee away," should make those who are resting there think of their own fleeting days, and of the joyful resurrection by and by.

An iron hook which in olden days bore the oil-lamp which lighted the worshippers to the church still hangs on the yew tree by the tower.

Chapter IV

THE VILLAGE SCHOOLS.

Perhaps in point of interest after the Parish Church and Churchyard we should describe the Village Schools as they existed in Farnborough sixty or seventy years ago.

At that time the education of the poorer classes was thought to be of little importance in this country. There were no state-aided elementary schools, and very few satisfactory church schools. The education of the Farnborough children had been almost entirely neglected. They could neither read nor write. A very small school, kept by a Miss Sophia Wheatley, is said to have existed in the village about this time, but little is known concerning her seminary. It was probably farmer Smith's wife, who lived at the Street Farm, who first made the people begin to consider the need of education for their children. She had come from London to marry Farmer Smith, and had secured a fairly good education. This enabled her to enjoy what books there were at hand, and to assist her husband in keeping his accounts. To Mrs. Smith, Farnborough folk, including her husband, seemed all behind the times and woefully ignorant.

Just about the same time Mrs. Morant arrived at Farnborough Place. She was a very gifted lady, and saw what need there was for the provision of some education for the village children. At length a properly organized school was started in the parish by means of voluntary subscriptions. The Farnborough people were always independent in

their character, and they were quite prepared to pay for what they had. A charge of twopence a week was made for each scholar, which was readily agreed to by the parents.

The mistress appointed to this new school was Mrs. Morant's late maid, Mrs. Cook. Her salary was £30 a year. Mrs. Cook lived in a nice little house in Rectory Road, with rooms on each side of the front door, and the schoolroom adjoined the house. These premises are not altered now in appearance from what they were in those days, except that then there was a big pond beside the house, in which there were fish. On one occasion, to the great delight of her scholars, a big pike was caught, weighing fourteen pounds, which had to be landed with a rake. The pond has since been filled up, and houses now cover the site.

Modern methods were not in vogue at Mrs. Cook's school, but the education was practical and good so far as it went. Printed time-tables were not provided, but the school work was done in quite an orderly way without them. Reading, writing, and arithmetic up to simple division were the principal subjects taught. The girls were instructed in plain needlework. Orders for work came from all the big houses, and the girls, under Mrs. Cook's guidance and supervision, had to carry them out. It was a most practical plan, and resulted in the children being taught plain needlework thoroughly. Only a form divided the boys from the girls, and whilst the girls were sewing the boys were taught a little history and geography.

Mrs. Cook was very great on courtesy, and taught her scholars in every way she could the duty of lowliness and reverence to those placed over them. When she entered the schoolroom and took her place at her desk, which stood on a low platform at one end of the room, she always demanded the curtsey or the bow from the children.

She was a very good Church woman, and her scholars were taught accordingly. The Rector took a keen interest in her work, and often visited the school.

Each day's work began with prayers and a Scripture lesson, whilst regular instruction in the Church Catechism was also given. On Ascension Day, and twice a week during Lent, she took her scholars to church, when they wore their special church uniform, which was kept in a cupboard in the schoolroom.

The boys had caps and red plaid scarves. The girls wore white straw bonnets, trimmed with blue ribbon, and green plaid cloaks, lined with a darker material, and very neat and nice they looked as they sat on their forms in the lord's aisle.

On Sunday morning the children always had to go to school to repeat their collect before they went to church. The arrival of the family from the Manor House greatly interested them. When the Lord of the Manor entered the church it was the custom for Mrs. Cook to raise her forefinger, which was a signal to her scholars to rise from their seats as a mark of respect to the squire and his family.

Mrs. Cook was a very stern schoolmistress, and her punishments were not pleasant. The boys fared worse than the girls. One of her penalties was to stand the naughty boys on forms. They did not mind that punishment, however, as they could then see from the schoolroom window what was going on in the street. For a more severe offence they would have to balance a Bible on each of their upturned hands. This was no easy task, but if a Bible was dropped the unburdened hand received a smart tap from Mrs. Cook's cane. The good lady was known to administer salts by way of punishment. The " fool's cap " was not unknown in her school, and a card which told of the little culprit's evildoings was sometimes suspended from the naughty child's neck. These methods will not

secure our approval now, but Mrs. Cook's influence and sound church teaching resulted in producing men and women loyal, industrious, and true to their Parish Church. In appearance Mrs. Cook was short in stature. She was very neat and tidy in her dress, and always wore a black gown, a muslin cap, close fitting, and tied under her chin. Velvet streamers hung down from her cap as far as her throat frill, which was always stiff and white. Below the frill she wore a white kerchief, and over her shoulders a cape of the same material as her dress. Her life could not have been all sunshine, for she was not very fortunate in her choice of a husband. Mr. Cook left much to be desired. He was very hot-tempered, and this may have accounted for his wife's downcast expression of face. He had been a weaver, and then a sailor, but seemed to give up work after his wife's school was started. He did a little baking for the big houses when he felt inclined to do so, but this cannot have brought in much money, as he was so frequently tired. Sometimes he took upon himself the task of punishing school offenders, and would flick the boys with a whip. Such expressions of energy did not win the goodwill of his wife's pupils.

Mrs. Cook continued her work at her school as long as she was able, and lived on in the schoolhouse to the end.

When she retired from work Miss Hicks took her place. She was quite young, and had not been in that position long before a Mr. Smith, a relative of Farmer Smith, came courting her. Sometimes he paid his attentions during school hours. It was then that the boys and girls had a fine opportunity to be up to their pranks; but woe betide them if Miss Hicks returned from her love-making in the garden before she was expected.

It may have been a little before Mrs. Cook's retirement that Mr. Greene came to live at the Lodge.

He at once took a keen interest in the welfare of the Farnborough village people, and particularly in the education of the children. He was not satisfied with the meagre instruction given to the boys and girls in Mrs. Cook's school, and decided to start more up-to-date schools at the other end of the parish, which would also provide education for the children of a larger area. He spared no time, trouble, or expense, in equipping these schools properly, and took the utmost interest in this work, personally visiting the schools daily. There were separate schools for boys, girls, and infants. They were severally under the charge of Mr., Mrs. and Miss Taylor, who lived at "Green Croft." Traces of the school premises may still be seen at "The Oaks," which was the boys' school; "The Beeches," which was the girls' school; and at "Green Croft," where the infants were instructed. The education given in these schools was much more advanced than that received at Mrs. Cook's establishment, and for that reason many of the Farnborough children were attracted to them. Children also attended from Hawley and Cove. At one time there were as many as 126 children in these schools.

Mr. Greene made a great point of instruction being given in music and singing. All movements in school were accompanied by music. When the children went from one class-room to another they sang as they went. They had to march with their hands on the shoulders of those in front of them, singing—

> **"Learn ye order, cherish it,**
> **Order spares both toil and time."**

The children learnt their music by the tonic-sol-fa system, which, we are told, they enjoyed.

The education in these early schools in Farnborough was somewhat limited compared with that which is given in modern schools, but those subjects which

were dealt with were taught thoroughly, and those who wished to continue their education after they left Mr. Greene's schools had a well-laid foundation upon which to build.

Rough behaviour was not allowed either in the school grounds or on the roads. The younger boys were placed under the charge of senior boys, who were responsible for any bad behaviour, and were punished along with the defaulters if any breach of good behaviour happened.

The great day at the school was Trafalgar Day, when all the parents were invited to an entertainment provided by the scholars. This generally took place in the grounds. It was for this occasion that Farmer Smith's mother, old Dame Smith, who lived in Highgate Lane, made her big, tempting buns. A bun and an orange were given to each scholar in honour of Trafalgar Day, when the entertainment closed.

Mr. Greene was most particular regarding the religious education of the children, and they received sound teaching on the Bible, Prayer Book, and Church Catechism.

He was very generous with regard to his terms. If the scholars could afford it they paid twopence a week, but if not, one penny sufficed. Mr. Brown, of Farnborough Street, acted as assistant master in the boys' school.

There was one regulation at Mr. Greene's girls' school which was considered a serious barrier to sending the daughters there by some of the Farnborough mothers of those days. All girls who attended this school were required to have their hair cut short. We are afraid this rule prevented many girls who possessed pretty hair from receiving as good an education as they might have done.

Mrs. Cook's little girls, sitting in the lord's aisle, knew they were not attending what was then the first-class school of the village, but they had their

locks, in all their glory. This was their compensation, as they saw Mr. Greene's close-cropped pupils sitting in the gallery.

And here may be mentioned an incident that happened on one occasion in the gallery, soon after it had been re-seated for Mr. Greene's pupils. The heroine of the story still lives in Farnborough, and smiles about it now—but it was no smiling matter when it took place. In those days there was a sexton, as well as a parish clerk. It was one of the sexton's duties to turn the handle of the barrel organ for the hymns. The barrel organ stood in the middle of the gallery, between the girls and the boys. Mr. Gates was then the sexton. He was a tall, fine-looking man, and somewhat severe. On this occasion some of Mr. Greene's boys had dared this little girl to watch her opportunity to turn the handle of the barrel organ when Mr. Gates was not looking, and she did it. When he was otherwise occupied up she got, and struck up a tune on the organ. She did not get very far, however, for when Mr. Gates heard " Tate and Brady " thus unexpectedly expressing themselves he was very angry. Next morning, at school, the little girl received a severe scolding, but she had made history for herself in Farnborough.

There was another small school at this time in the village. It was kept by Miss Joyce, in two upstair rooms of her house which has since been pulled down. It was called Rose Cottage, and stood near to the corner of Priory Road. The scholars who attended Miss Joyce's establishment paid sixpence a week, so it was considered very select.

Mr. Greene died in 1887, and his educational work came to an end. Mrs. Cook's school had also ceased to give satisfaction. The church people of Farnborough began now to consider anxiously the matter of public education.

In making a start they requisitioned Mrs. Cook's old schoolroom, and the first headmaster was a Mr. Noakes. These premises, however, were very small, and not convenient, and in 1868 the site on which the present Church Schools stand was given to the parish by Thomas Norton Longman, Esq., of Farnborough Hill. It was a day of great rejoicing in Farnborough when the new schools were opened. They were built chiefly through the generosity of Farnborough church people, and were put under trust of the Rector and Churchwardens. They were to be used for promoting education and the principles of the Church of England.

The new schools seemed very capacious, and their furniture appeared almost luxurious after the smaller schools. As has been already mentioned, Mrs. Cook's school-house is still standing in Rectory Road but it has now been turned into a motor store, which, strangely enough, is kept by a Mr. Noakes. The old building is one of the relics of the past history of Farnborough, and a reminder of Mrs. Cook's influence in the parish.

The Church Schools were carried on for many years, maintained by the pence of the children and the voluntary subscriptions of church people. Farnborough was noted for its excellent schools.

Such is the story of education in our parish in the past, before the State took the important work in hand. The Church Schools are still retained; may they flourish, and contribute to the highest interests of the parish in training the children in religion and citizenship.

Chapter V

THE MANOR HOUSE AND OTHER HOUSES.

We may reasonably suppose that when King Alfred left by his will, in 901, "the ham (vill) at Crundele" to Ethelm, the son of his brother Ethelbert, he left him the whole of the Manor, Farnborough included, and that Farnborough passed with the rest, first to Bishop Aelfsige, Bishop of Winchester from 951 to 959, and later, in the time of King Edgar (975), to Winchester Cathedral.

The first actual mention of Farnborough is found in Domesday Book, 1086, when a survey of the Kingdom was made by order of William the Conqueror, the main object of which was to ascertain the right assessments for the payment of the (Dane) geld. We are there told that "Odin of Windsore holds of the Bishop 3 hides in Ferneberga, Alwin held them of the Bishop, in parage, and could not betake himself anywhere."

The isolation of Farnborough from the Hundred of Crondal in early days cause the references to it to be few. In records of the 13th and 14th centuries mention is made of Stephen de Farnburghe, and his son, Henry of Farnburwe, and of John de Farneburghe, and, later still, of Amicia de Farnburghe. In the 14th century the Manor seems to have passed to the Cheyne family. It is in Bishop Wykeham's Register, under the year 1379, we find a licence of non-residence for one year, granted to the Rector of Farnborough (Richard Gloudy), that he might be in attendance on the Countess of Arundel and Sir Thomas Cheigny, Kt.

Later the Manor was in the hands of Johanna More, and later still of William Dawtre. Through William Dawtre's daughter it passed, at the beginning of the 16th Century, to the Norton family, and in 1619 Edward Dickinson bought Farnborough Place and the Manor Farm of Sir Richard Norton.

Edward Dickinson died on November 11th, 1630, and was buried at Farnborough. By his will he directed that Farnborough Place should be sold for the benefit of his son and daughters. His eldest daughter married Richard Sterne, who, after passing through troublous times, in 1642 became Archbishop of York.

It was to Sterne that Laud handed his dying speech, when he had read it from the scaffold. Sixty or seventy years ago there was to be seen on the church wall a handsome monument in memory of Mrs. Sterne. How it came to be destroyed nobody knows, but later it was found, broken, in the stoke-hole of the church, where it had been used in breaking the coke. The top of the monument is affixed to the wall in the tower, and on it is a shield bearing the arms of the Sterne and Dickinson families. The inscription is preserved, and reads thus: "Here by the side of her loving parents lies Elizabeth daughter of Edward Dickinson formerly lord of this manor. She was the wife of Richard, Archbishop of York, and the mother of thirteen children, all of whom, through the mercy of God, were washed in the water of baptism. A most affectionate daughter, wife, and mother. Remarkable for her unostentatious love of God and man. Most dear to God and man, she quietly fell asleep in the Lord in London on the 6th March, 1673, in the 58th year of her age. Her memory is blessed."

Mrs. Sterne evidently always retained her love for her old home, and was brought back to Farnborough to be buried. Richard and Elizabeth Sterne were the great-grandparents of Lawrence Sterne,

the author of " Tristran Shandy " and " A Sentimental Journey."

The earliest date connecting the Annesley family with Farnborough is 1652. There were six Earls of Anglesey, and Farnborough Place was one of their seats. The first Earl had seven sons and six daughters. His eldest daughter, Dorothy, married Richard Power, first Earl of Tyrone, who died in the Tower of London, 1690, whilst a prisoner. He was brought to Farnborough for burial. Richard, sixth and last Earl of Anglesey, died in 1761. There are some interesting notes concerning the Annesley family in the parish register. One tells of Lady Mary Lloyd, daughter of the first Earl of Anglesey, being buried in the crypt " in linen. November 22nd, 1694." Another mentions " the wife of the 5th Earl of Anglesey " being buried in a coffin laced with velvitt, contrary to the Act of Parliament 1718-1719." It appears that in 1666 an Act of Parliament was passed to lessen the importation of linen and to encourage the woollen manufacturers. It ordained " that all persons should be buried in woollen, and the coffin lined with nothing but woollen," and for a breach of this law the fine was £5, which evidently the Earls of Anglesey were prepared to pay. One of the Annesleys figured in the law courts during his residence in Farnborough Place, and made history for Sir Walter Scott's novel, " Guy Mannering," which gives an account of the trial. Charles Reade, too, made a romance of the trial, which was published in the Christmas number of *The Graphic* in 1872, under the title " The Wandering Heir."

There is a good description of Farnborough country at this time to be found in John Mackey's book, " A Journey Through England," published in 1722. He writes: " Being now to proceed on my journey through the rest of England, I took the Winchester stage coach, and crossing the Thames at

Staines, dined at a small village called Egham. and from thence through the most heathy country I ever saw. In eighteen miles more got to Farnham. If a stranger be brought asleep out of London, and awake in the Forest, as they call it, he would think himself in Westphalia; it being all over heath and furze as there, and not a house to be seen all the way, except a hunting-seat of the Earl of Anglesey's called 'Farnborough,' which makes the better appearance, standing in so coarse a country, and being very well planted with trees."

The Annesley family were succeeded in the Manor House by the Wilmots, in 1768. Squire Henry Wilmot was a solicitor of Gray's Inn, and was known in the profession, on account of his height and size, as "The Giant." He entertained largely and liberally at Farnborough Place. He was often visited there by Sir Joshua Reynolds and David Garrick. The latter has left his mark on the garden wall in some lines in which he perpetuates the memory of a favourite cat, called "Hoppy." The lines are inscribed on a marble tablet, at the foot of which, shown in relief, is the cat with her kittens.

By the kindness of Major and Mrs. Carlyon, who now reside at Farnborough Place, I am able to print Garrick's words:—

"Nine lives in sin and sorrow spent,
Finished their course beneath this stone;
Here lies a wretch on blood so bent
She like Medea, spilt her own.
Death saw here deeds, and justice grew
To have a rival in his blade,
With envy saw the heaps she slew,
And all the havoc she had made.
In rage the fatal dart he drives,
Not her nine lives his hunger pall,
Had Hoppy's every hair been lives,
Death had a stomach for them all."

To the Squire's son, Valentine Henry, who was very fond of "Hoppy," Garrick sent the following lines:—

"No more, dear youth, shall Hoppy scratch and purr;
O never fondle animals like her,
From every naughty puss guard well thy mind,
Wicked and wanton, all are after kind.
Wouldst thou shun cat and sirelike love the law,
Thou'lt ne'er be clawed and scratched, but scratch and claw."

A portrait of Mrs. Wilmot and her daughter was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds as a grateful acknowledgment of a very pleasant visit to Farnborough Place.

Henry Wilmot died in 1794. His tablet in the south transept says: "He met death with cheerfulness and exultation." He was succeeded by his son, Valentine Henry Wilmot, who died in 1819.

In the Churchwarden's account book there is the record of an agreement dated September 3rd, 1769, between Mr. Henry Wilmot and the vestry, whereby an exchange of a strip of land is made for the improvement of the prospect from the house, and the churchyard gate moved from the east side of the church porch to the west of the said porch."

There is a very beautiful memorial tablet erected to Sarah, Henry Wilmot's wife, in the south transept, which is worded thus:—"Her afflicted family erect this tablet to her superior excellence in every relation of life, wherein she displayed all those virtues which are the genuine emanations of a heart glowing with universal benevolence. Her refined taste, and the brilliant talents she possessed, she made subservient to all her domestic duties. Her piety and integrity were invariable from her earliest infancy. The patience and cheerful resignation which supported her through many years of severe suffering, and were awfully conspicuous in her last moments, constitute the most striking example and brightest ornament of the Christian faith."

Mr. George Morant became owner of Farnborough Place, and lord of the manor in 1848, but when Captain George Henry Elliot bought the Park and Manor Farm some ten years later, the lordship of the manor was not included in the purchase, Mr. Morant holding it till his death, in 1875. The manorial rights were bought in 1885 by Mr. Richard Eve, a solicitor, at Aldershot. He died in 1900, and these rights were acquired in 1903 by Mrs. Holt, of Farnborough Grange, whose son, Colonel Harold Sherwin Holt, is the present lord of the manor.

Until 1903 Farnborough Place had been the residence of the lords of the manor for nearly 300 years. Some parts of an original building still remain, and are supposed to date back to the reign of King John, when Farnborough was on the outskirts of Windsor Forest.

A manor in early days generally had attached to it a private chapel, for the use of the household and servants of the manor, and others on the estate.

If this was the case at Farnborough, as seems most probable, it explains the rumour that there is an underground passage running from the cellars of Farnborough Place to the church. The passage is supposed to end near the old yew tree. The staircase in the house leading down to the cellars is very solid and panelled, and appears to have been placed there for a more important purpose than to reach the cellars. When a new carriage drive to the house was being made a few years ago, the ground gave way under the steam-roller above where this passage is supposed to have been. There is also a very ancient well in the house which, no doubt, has a history attached to it.

It is claimed that the Manor House was restored to its present condition by the famous architect, Sir Christopher Wren, who lived from 1632 till 1723. If this is so, the work of restoration could not have taken place till the time of the Earls of Anglesey.

Along with the restoration there was enlargement, which can be traced from the central parts of the building, where the walls are of great thickness and strength, and beautifully decorated.

Farnborough Place has seen some smart and gay doings in its time. It is said that Nell Gwynne was in the habit of staying there in Charles II's reign, and the sport to be obtained in those days in this part of the country must have made the Manor House a popular hunting residence. This is all past history, however. The influence of the squire and his family in the village was probably always great, but the memory of few of the villagers can now go back beyond the time of Mr. Morant.

Mr. George Morant, according to the recollection of the people, was " a very aristocratic looking gentleman, rather stout, and important in his manner of doing things." His entrance into church on Sunday was most impressive. There was a special peg fixed in the Jacobean screen, on which the Squire's Sunday hat was placed. He had four sons and a daughter, Mary Phyllis, who was much admired by all the Farnborough children.

Squire Morant kept greyhounds in his kennels, quarry for which was found in his park and on adjoining property, where hares and rabbits were plentiful. Miss Phyllis Morant was a keen sportswoman. She was often to be seen going down to the pond in front of " Tumbledown Dick " with her dogs.

Several packs of hounds hunted the district in Squire Morant's time. On one occasion, when the Royal hounds were hunting through Farnborough, the stag, after leaving the park, crossed the Rectory lawn, and ran through the glebe fields into the deep railway cutting. Closely pressed by the hounds, the stag fled under the bridge, and then into Mr. Greene's woods. Being hard pressed, he sprang

from the high bank beside the line on to the top of the water tank at which the engines filled up. Here he stood at bay, with the hounds and huntsmen all round. At length the stag was brought to the ground, and for his cleverness returned to Windsor in a covered cart.

The story is also told that on another occasion the same stag, or another, took the same line, but crossed the railway cutting on the footbridge, and thence ran across Farnborough Hill and Frimley back to Windsor.

Captain Elliot, who succeeded Mr. Morant at Farnborough Place, is still remembered. Although he was never lord of the manor, he was much beloved by many in the village. He damaged his reputation somewhat through his great love of privacy, for it is remembered how he destroyed elderberries, blackberries, and other coveted produce, rather than let the villagers go to his park to pick them. As there was a right of way through the park the intrusion of tramps and other outsiders was always an annoyance there.

Mrs. Elliot also won the affection of the villagers. She was a tall, graceful woman, and very gifted. In the entrance hall at Farnborough Place there is some excellent wood carving which is known to have been her work.

Captain and Mrs. Elliot had one son, and it was his untimely death which led to the disastrous break-up of the Farnborough Place Estate.

Next in point of age and interest must be mentioned the mansion known as " Farnborough Hill." The present beautiful building stands near the site of a much smaller house, which was originally known as " Windmill Hill." At the end of the seventeenth century the land belonged to Lieutenant-General Grant. In 1806 it passed to his son, James Ludovick Grant. He built " a commodious residence with offices " thereon, and increased the acreage of the

property, but circumstances compelled him to sell the estate, and it was bought by Mr. Foreman.

Mrs. Foreman was a rather eccentric old lady, and left strange orders concerning herself in her will. She died in Harley Street, but her wish was that her body should be brought to her home in Farnborough, to lie in state. We can well imagine the sensation this order must have caused in the village, and probably many of the villagers made their way to Windmill Hill to pay their last respects to Mrs. Foreman. Mr. Foreman had died previously in Paris. He was buried at Père la Chaise, but Mrs. Foreman had retained his heart, which she kept in a marble urn. At her request this urn and her wedding ring were placed in her coffin. She was buried under or near the altar, in Whitley Church, where she had often worshipped. Mrs. Foreman was a sister to Dr. Chandler, Dean of Chichester, to whom she left her property. Dr. Chandler had persuaded Mrs. Foreman, before her death, to build the bungalow in the wood nearly opposite to her house. It was then called " The Pavilion," and she built it in order that her nephew, Mr. Greene, might live there, and be near enough to her to look after her in her old age.

Mrs. Foreman died in 1836, leaving her estate to her brother. The Dean of Chichester died in 1859, and the property then passed to his nephew, the Rev. W. Chandler.

The Dean of Chichester never lived at Windmill Hill, but had as tenants there, first the Farquaharsons and afterwards Lady Palmer and her family. The three Misses Palmer were much admired by the village people, especially when they rode about the neighbourhood on horseback. They were considered very grand ladies, and " a bit haughtylike." They were, however, very charitable, and it was considered that Lady Palmer only claimed her right when she demanded due deference from the village

people. Old Dame Smith, who lived in Highgate Lane, always supplied Lady Palmer with a special loaf once a week. It was baked on an open hearth, in an earthenware dish, with an earthenware bowl placed over it.

When the property came into the possession of the Rev. W. Chandler he at once sold it to Thomas Longman, Esq., the well-known London publisher. The building of the new house, known as "Farnborough Hill," was at once commenced, the architect being Mr. H. E. Kendall, and it was not finished until November, 1863, when Mr. Longman and his family took up their residence at Farnborough Hill. Mr. Longman died at Farnborough, August 30th, 1879. In the following year the house became the residence of the illustrious Empress Eugenie. The mansion was much altered, and large additions were made, but the sign of Longman's publishing firm, "The Ship and Swan," still remain in the exterior ornamentation.

It is impossible to write of Farnborough Hill without referring to Douglas McLaurin, who was first Mr. Longman's, and afterwards the Empress's honourable and faithful bailiff. He lived in the bailiff's cottage near the "Ship." His high principles, his love of truth, and contempt for all that was small and mean, stamped him as a servant of most exceptional value.

Another faithful retainer was the coachman, Richard Wright. "Richard," as he was always called, had not the education of Douglas McLaurin, but he knew all about horses. He was a bit of a dandy in his way, and always prided himself on the smart appearance of his horses and carriages. He was also whipper-in to Mr. Longman when he took out his harriers. In Richard's married life he met with great misfortune. In little more than three years his first wife died, and the marriage with two successors took place. On receiving congratulations

just after having led Number Three to the altar, he said: "Yes, it is certainly true that I have been unfortunate in losing of 'em, but I have been most fortunate in getting of 'em."

Many literary people visited Farnborough Hill in those days. Amongst the most regular were Mr. Henry Reeve and James Anthony Froude. They both enjoyed a little sport, and Mr. Longman's son, Norton, used to go out shooting with them for the supply of the larder.

Mr. Froude's first wife was sister to Charles Kingsley, Vicar of Eversley, and as Eversley was only about six miles from Farnborough, the Kingsleys often found their way to Farnborough Hill. There was a very good cricket pitch in the grounds, where many happy matches took place.

Mr. Longman and his family were much beloved in the village, and they made it their business to do all they could for the betterment and happiness of the villagers. They were good to everybody. The young ladies visited the sick, and always took with them some little dainty from the big house with which to tempt the invalid.

Mrs. Longman was a very beautiful woman; she was musical, and had charming manners which endeared her to the poor.

Mr. Longman was a keen sportsman. A small herd of fallow deer used to range round Frimley Green, Mitchett Lake, and "Rogues' Hollow," by which name the country on the canal by Pain's Pond was then known. They afforded much sport, as, when hunted, they would constantly swim the canal, and so get away whilst the huntsmen were finding the nearest bridge. The hunt extended over the district now known as Bisley.

The fish in Mr. Longman's pond, though numerous, were very small, with the exception of some carp. Mr. Longman's sons were very keen on

the fishing, however, and in that, as in other sports, they were generally to be seen in the company of Mr. Clayton's sons, from the Rectory.

A great deal of entertaining was done at Farnborough Hill during Mr. Longman's residence there, and the departure of the family from the neighbourhood after Mr. Longman's death was much regretted.

Mr. Greene came into residence at "The Lodge," as the "Pavilion" was now called, soon after the battle of Waterloo. He was nephew to Dr. Chandler, the Dean of Chichester, and his primary object in coming to Farnborough was to be near his aunt, Mrs. Foreman. He had served as a subaltern at Waterloo. His two sweet sisters often came to Farnborough to visit him. They were twins, and one of them was much afflicted, possessing only one arm. It was most remarkable how cleverly she managed to hide this defect, and with her one hand she carved in wood and stone most beautifully.

Mr. Greene endeared himself to everybody in Farnborough, and his memory is still cherished. He took a very keen interest in the welfare of the village children. As an antiquarian he was enthusiastic in all matters referring to Farnborough's past history. The main road, before the London and South Western Railway cutting was made, ran through Mr. Greene's woods, where it can still be traced.

Mr. Greene lived on at "The Lodge" until 1887. He was succeeded by his nephew, Mr. Ewen, who carried on much of his uncle's good work until he died, in 1901. Since that time Mrs. Ewen has well maintained the traditions of that house in her many good works, and has won the love and esteem of all who know her.

"The Grange" does not possess quite such a long history. The house was built on land which had belonged to Hutty's Farm. Hutty was a strange old

Yorkshireman. He lived in a tumble-down old farm-house near to " The Oaks." This has long since been pulled down. Hutty enjoyed a glass of beer each day, which he took at the " Prince of Wales." When the glass was half emptied he always had it refilled with water.

" The Grange " at first was quite a small house. It was built by Mr. Timms, and he resided there till the time of his death. He was twice married, and the second Mrs. Timms was a famous musician. She took a great interest in the choir boys. They were delighted to go to " The Grange " for their practice, as, when the work was over, she gave them cake and coffee.

Mr. Timms died at Farnborough, and is buried in the Cemetery. Mrs. Timms then let " The Grange " for a time to Sir Hope Grant, and after that her property was sold to Mr. Sherwin, who made great additions to the house. Mr. Sherwin had almost a mania for enlarging and beautifying small houses, and " The Grange " was a specimen of his work. It was the seventh house that he had so treated. Mr. and Mrs. Sherwin were very charitable to the poor, and did a great deal for the Church. The present beautiful chancel, reredos, and east window were their gifts. " The Grange " was next occupied by Major Holt. Mrs. Holt was Mr. Sherwin's niece, and Major and Mrs. Holt came to live at " The Grange " after the death of Mr. and Mrs. Sherwin. The village was much indebted to Major Holt for his generosity, and in particular for the Jubilee Hall, which was his gift. This he built in 1898, to be used as a Church house and a working men's club. The lychgate at the entrance to the Churchyard was placed there by his son, the present lord of the manor, in memory of his parents.

In this brief account of those who have occupied the big houses in Farnborough it has been impossible

to record all the stories that have been told by old residents; but perhaps what has been written will be interesting, as illustrating the social conditions of Farnborough in the past. Those in high places felt their responsibility with regard to the needs of the people, and the villagers esteemed them much, and appreciated their good will.

Chapter VI

FARNBOROUGH STREET.

Apart from the big houses and the old inns, the village of Farnborough seventy years ago was mostly contained in Farnborough Street. In the Cove Road, which is now known as Victoria Road, there was an old pink-washed house, where " Kingsmead " now stands, another old house, which still stands behind the Drapery Stores, and the Victoria Cottages; also Mr. Greene's three school houses. There were a few cottages, too, in Workhouse Lane, now known as Union Street, but the village really lay on the east side of the turnpike road. Rectory Road, in those days, went by the name of Dog Kennel Lane, and led down to Farnborough Street. When the Manor House hounds were given up this title gave place to Rectory Road.

Near the entrance to Dog Kennel Lane, Coombe Farm was situated. It was a flourishing homestead, and belonged to Farmer Calloway. It comprised the land running down towards Cove. Farmer Calloway was a very prosperous man, and engaged many of the Farnborough men. When he died the farm was carried on by Mr. Ford for a short time, and later some of the property came into Mr. Dever's hands, who built " The Ridges " and other houses.

Dog Kennel Lane then, as now, was always dark and muddy in winter-time, but more so then than now, as there was neither drainage nor gas lamps. In summer-time it was always an exceedingly pretty and favourite walk. There was no building in Dog Kennel Lane except the Park stables and kennels, till the Rectory was reached.

There have been six Rectors of Farnborough during the last seventy years. The Rev. John Henry Clayton came to Farnborough in 1839. He was an Oxford man, and a contemporary there with Newman. For twenty-three years he was Rector of Farnborough, and he and Mrs. Clayton took a great interest in all that concerned the parish, and were much beloved. Mrs. Clayton was a Miss Sheppard, of Frome, Somerset, and was, as things went in those days, a rather advanced Churchwoman. This showed itself in her care for the church, but she interested herself in all that concerned the parishioners. She pleased the villagers greatly by showing her artistic skill in her designs for the pot shop work. William Smith allowed her to work there. Her son, Cecil, trod the clay for her, and she designed and made a tea-set of the Farnborough ware, some of which is still in existence. Mrs. Clayton was very fond of her garden, and encouraged the school children to love the flowers. She made beautiful wax models of the red, yellow and scarlet fungi which grew so plentifully in the sandy soil under the fir trees in the Rectory garden. Besides her home duties she found time to visit the sick and aged in the parish, and was most charitable to the poor. The Rector's wife was very musical, and did much to improve the singing in the Church. The choristers were trained at the Rectory, and were taught to sing the Kyrie after the Commandments. As the barrel-organ only had hymn tunes, all other singing in church depended on Mrs. Clayton. Amid her many duties time was found for some literary work. Her death at the birth of her youngest child caused great sorrow in the parish. Mrs. Clayton was buried near to her little son, by the oaken porch on the north side of the church, and later on the Rev. John Henry Clayton was brought to Farnborough to rest near his wife. He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Francis Scot in 1862. Mr. Scot was

Mary Bisset.

a single gentleman, and not strong, so he often had to be away from Farnborough; but he was very good to everybody, and much beloved.

The Rectory at this time was managed by a housekeeper, Mary Bisset, who is still remembered by some of the people. She was a Scotchwoman, not very handsome, tall and middle-aged, and very severe in her manner, but she possessed a kind heart, and no child ever went to the Rectory in those days without bringing away apples or other goodies from Mary Bisset's hands. She always wore a tight-fitting bodice with rather a full skirt, and the sleeves of her dress only reached her elbows. She wore a white apron, and a cap tied under her chin, something after the pattern of the cap worn by Dame Cook. Although not much to look at, she was a very good housekeeper and cook. The housemaid's name at that time was Violet. She was younger and more comely than Mary Bisset, but dressed in much the same style. She, too, was a Scotchwoman. Somehow the names, Mary Bisset and Violet, seem to suit the old house, and the Rev. Robert Francis Scot thought a great deal of these two good women. When he left Farnborough, to go to Worksop, Mary Bisset went with him, but Violet returned to Scotland. They have probably finished their course by this time, for they were then both getting on in years.

There is, or was, a pane of glass in one of the Rectory windows, on which the names of two of the village boys of those times were scratched with a diamond. The owners of the names still live in the village, though whether the pane of glass is still in the Rectory window is not so certain. There was also a notched door in the Rectory, showing the annual growth of a boy, whose initials were "J.B." The Rector was very kind to the choir. They had their practice at the Rectory, and when it was over Mary Bisset always had ready refreshments for the

men upstairs, while the boys got their needs supplied in the kitchen.

The Rev. Robert Francis Scot was followed by Canon Valpy, in 1878. During the four years of his incumbency the central part of St. Mark's Church was built, and consecrated by Bishop Harold Browne in 1881. The daughter church was completed in 1889.

The Rev. Arthur Edoe Kinch came to Farnborough in 1882. At this time the parish was growing rapidly, and the work was very heavy. Through his influence, on the 10th of July, 1906, an Order in Council constituted the southern part of the Parish of Farnborough a separate district, with St. Mark's Church. A great deal had to be done in the northern parish also. The church was repaired, and enlarged by the addition of north and south transepts and south aisle. Further work was also necessitated by the extension of the churchyard. Mr. Kinch lived at the Rectory with his mother and sister. They all devoted themselves to the parish, and are affectionately remembered for their sympathy and good works. Mrs. Kinch died at the Rectory, and Miss Kinch was married from the Rectory to Colonel Horniblow. Mr. Kinch was never a strong man, and after devoting himself to his work for twenty-nine years was obliged to resign through ill-health. He was followed by the Rev. Bernard Cecil Jackson in 1911, who remained in Farnborough till 1921.

Canon Challacombe is at present the incumbent.

A little further down Dog Kennel Lane, on the other side of the road, came Manor Farm. This was worked by Farmer Goodfellow. When he died his daughter went to live at Crowthorne, and the farm was taken by Mr. Hart. " Manor Farm " now only denotes a private dwelling-house. On the same side stood a small cottage, in which Mr. Busby and his wife lived. Busby was butler to Squire Morant. That cottage has since been pulled down. Further

down the lane stood Miss Joyce's school, and a little way beyond this Dame Cook's house and schoolroom. Four old cottages still remain to show what Farnborough Street cottages were like seventy years ago. About that time Mr. Gates, the sexton, lived in one of them. Three other cottages of much the same style as those that remain, once stood on the ground which is now occupied by the Infants' School. The gardens belonging to these cottages were always bright with flowers, and well stocked with a good variety of vegetables. Bob Mason, the sexton, and his family, at one time lived in one of these houses, Master and Dame Cooke occupied another (not Dame Cook, the schoolmistress). Master and Dame Cooke were a dear old couple. Sally Littlefield lived in the third. She was an extraordinary little woman, with her chin nearly touching her nose.

When these cottages were pulled down, one of the prettiest corners of Farnborough was spoiled, and Council Schools were a very poor substitute for what had been there previously, in point of beauty.

The Street Farm, now known as "Ye Olde Farm," came next. Everybody who has known anything about the past history of Farnborough feels thankful that the old house is still left standing, little changed in appearance from days of long ago.

Seventy years ago Street Farm, with its picturesque house, was the centre of Farnborough activity. The farm was worked by Mr. William Smith. He was a very enterprising farmer, and carried on a big business in bacon-curing. Farmer Smith's bacon was a noted household commodity all round the district. Sometimes he would cure as many as fifty sides at a time, which meant much hard work for those who helped him.

Later on Farmer Smith also started a pottery business, which at one time he managed with great

success. The pot shop was not far from the farmhouse, and quite a large number of men were employed there. It was rather a strange thing that Farmer Smith started his pot-making in Farnborough, as all the clay had to be fetched from Farnham, which entailed a good deal of extra work, but this was accomplished, and for a time the Farnborough potter did a very good trade in London with his wares. The brick-kiln in which the pottery was baked stood quite near to the pot-shop. Lighting the fire was no easy matter, and was generally one of the duties that belonged to the boy who was also engaged to go out with the milk. In order to light the fire the small boy had to crawl down a very small and stuffy passage way under the bricks. It cannot have been a very nice or a very safe job, even for a boy.

When the new Doulton ware was introduced in London William Smith soon found the orders for his much less finished work sadly diminish, and when his pottery business failed the pot-shop and kiln soon fell into a state of disorder, and were pulled down.

Farmer Smith and his family were very hard-working people. What they undertook to do they did with a will, and they did it well. They were very much respected in the village. Farmer Smith was always cheery, and had something to say on most subjects. Conscription was not in force in those days, but when the sick and wounded from Sebastopol began to arrive at Farnborough, followed by many dreadful stories about what was going on in the Crimea, Farmer Smith was heard to say "if things did not go better he would send William and John, his two sons, with two of his farm horses, to help them there."

There were two riddles which he considered quite his own. He probably heard them when he was doing his pottery business in London, and he was very fond of asking them. The first one was this:

The Old Farm and Pollard Tree, Farnborough Street.

" A man rode up the hill and yet he walked," and when he had puzzled the person questioned sufficiently he would say "'Yettie' was the name of his little dog." The other riddle was: " It is no part of the coach, but the coach cannot go without it," and the answer to that was " The noise."

Besides owning the farm and the pot-shop, the Smiths also carried on a thriving provision business at the old farmhouse. The room nearest to the street was used as the shop, and was managed by Farmer Smith's daughter, Susan. A wonderful woman was Susan Smith! Besides managing the shop she also did a certain amount of bread-baking, and her bread was always greatly in demand in the village. It would keep fresh for a week. It was baked in an oven heated with a wood fire, and the yeast for it was fetched from Frimley. She made flat-shaped loaves, with very crispy crust. It was like taking cake to eat Susan Smith's bread. She also managed the milk business for her father. It was she who engaged the boys to take round the milk, which was carried in tin pails, and hung one on each side of the carriers from a yoke. There was one little lad in Farnborough whose father, in spite of his diminutive size, took him down to see Susan, hoping to get the boy work. Susan was a very kind woman, and said she, " It does not matter if the boy is small, so long as he is willing." He was willing, so the little chap got the post, and afterwards, before she hung the pails of milk on the yoke for him to carry, she always felt the weight herself first, saying " I think you can carry that." Was it not a kind of parable, illustrating the care with which our Father proportions to our strength those other burdens which so many of us are called upon to bear?

Susan Smith certainly lived a very strenuous life. Many can still remember her standing behind her counter. Her shop was kept scrupulously clean and

tidy, and was just the general shop that was needed, for she sold everything that Farnborough folk could fancy. Think of the appetising air of Susan's shop! Tallow candles, tobacco, lard and butter, tea, coffee, snuff, vinegar and soap, cheese, carraway seeds, bacon, bread and, maybe, bloaters. Then there were Susan's lollipops, pear drops, acid drops and peppermints, balls of string, and drawers containing other mysteries. Together they produced that mysterious smell which is to be found nowhere but in a village shop. There was, of course, a shop bell affixed to the door, to let Susan know when a customer had arrived, should she be busy elsewhere in the house, and there was a board above the doorway witnessing to her right and licence to sell snuff and tobacco. Though the bell and the board have both gone, Street Farmhouse has changed but little in its appearance since those days. The two staircases are still there, and the glass door leading into the garden and the orchard. The dairy, the loft and the cellars (and the rats, perhaps) are still there, too. In those old days the rats caused much trouble, for they would make their way to the loft above the dairy, where the bacon was usually stowed away, and did a great deal of damage.

In a cottage near by the pot-shop lived Farmer Smith's old mother. She was a very cross-grained old lady, and never too pleasant to those who visited her; nor was she too well-beloved by her relations. She did a little baking for the village people, and supplied one loaf of her home-made bread each week to Lady Palmer. She also sold cakes, and her annual order from Mr. Greene for his scholars' buns was a great event with the old woman.

The village post office in those days was situated on the other side of Farnborough Street, in the fourth of the row of houses now known as Elm Terrace, not far from Street Farm. At one time it was managed by Mrs. Grandy, and she, too, was

a very irritable old lady, and the terror of the village children. She only attended to business when it suited her, and sometimes her customers had to wait a long time before she answered their call. She was followed by Mr. Chorlton, known locally as "the village pig-sticker" and sexton at the church. He was assisted in his Post Office work by his daughter Jane. She was a very enterprising woman, and in her younger days she acted as postwoman, and took round the letters. Jane carried on the post office work after her father's death, and also did a good business by the sale of needles, darning wools, sweets, etc. Before the 5th of November she was always unusually busy in fitting out the guys. She was famous for her masks, and black ones were generally in special request. She kept her work until she was very old, and could do no more. The Post Office accounts were always a sore trial to her, and in her old age the Rector's sister, Miss Kinch, often had to go and make up her books for her. She was very precise in all other matters, and liked no interference from anybody. The children in the village had a very wholesome dread of her, and, like Mrs. Grandy, she only attended to her customers when she thought she would. She kept a chain on her door, and served her stamps out through a little shuttered window. The poor old lady was one morning found dead in her bed.

A little lower down the road stood the old pollard tree, which was a very ancient elm, supposed to be the last survivor of the old hunting forest. It stood beside the roadway. It was the property of the lord of the manor. A wooden fence encircled it, which was put there in order to protect it from further destruction. There is an interesting entry in the Churchwardens' accounts for 1797, which runs as follows: "Paid Aaron Brown for repairing the seat round the tree, and painting two gates, £1 0s. 9d." Round the pollard tree the children

played, and it was a trysting place for the village lads and lasses. It was also the scene of the annual pig-killing for the village at Christmas time. Straw fires to singe the slaughtered pigs were built in public, and this gruesome spectacle was so common that it was little accounted of. There were no motor horns to be heard in Farnborough in those days, but owls nested in the pollard tree, and hooted at the boys who climbed up after their eggs, and sometimes attacked them. The birds were so fierce that the adventure for the eggs was rather a dangerous one. It was looked upon as little less than a catastrophe when the order came from those in authority that the pollard tree was to be cut down, for its age and history had endeared it to the village, and " it always had been there." The tree was removed in 1917.

Beyond the pollard tree stood the village stocks. They seem to have been Church property, for there is an entry in the church accounts which says : " 1810, Stocks, £2 8s. od." Stocks, in days gone by, were " well known instruments used for the punishment of rogues and vagabonds, and the terror of evil-doers." £2 8s. od. seems rather a heavy price for the Farnborough Churchwardens to have had to pay, but it was a comparatively cheap and effective method of punishment. The village stocks have disappeared as well as the pollard tree.

Nearby the stocks on the right-hand side of the road, there used to be three more picturesque little cottages. Each possessed only a living room and a bedroom, with a wash-house at the back. Two high stone steps formed the way of approach. In these cottages lived Joe Finch, father of Eli Finch; old " Six O'clock " and his wife, Phœbe, otherwise known as Mr. and Mrs. Maynard, and Mr. Bellweather, with his niece, Elsie.

Old Mr. " Six O'clock " always started out in the morning with a leaf in his mouth, which he picked from his garden, and it, or another, was there still

The Old Village Post Office.

when he returned from work in the evening. The leaf was invariably an oak leaf, and kept between the lips to cure a small ulcer which he had on his lower lip, and which it successfully remedied.

This old man was well known in the village for his regular and punctual habits, but he did not quite appreciate his nickname, and this Mr. Bellweather's niece, Elsie, knew. Her uncle had a magpie which was very mischievous, and when Elsie hung up the washing the magpie would take out the clothes pegs, and let the clothes fall; but this was not its only crime. The bird was taught to call out, "Here comes old Six O'clock," which naturally made the old man very angry. It was much regretted when those cottages were condemned. They certainly had been well-built, which is more than can be said about many more modern houses, and the man who bought them had more to pay for destroying them than he paid for their purchase. Just opposite to them stood Yew Tree Cottage, where lived Mr. Gates, the baker. At his shop baking was done on Sundays, for in those days it was the custom to send the Sunday joint and potatoes to be cooked at the bakehouse, whilst the family went to church. Dinner was then ready when service was over.

Mr. Gates also made excellent brandy snaps, which were very popular among Mrs. Cook's scholars, who went to purchase them on their way to school. Sometimes the shop was not open, so the children had to call out their orders, and Mr. Gates would push the brandy snaps under the door. Mrs. Gates kept a big box mangle, and did quite a lot of mangling for the villagers, so between them Mr. and Mrs. Gates got on very well.

Round the corner, on the way to Farnborough Green, there was another village shop, kept by Sally Bridger. This was quite an aristocratic place of business. Drapery was her special line, but besides that Sally Bridger also went in largely for the sale

of all kinds of patent medicines; rhubarb pills, castor oil, senna, etc. She also sold excellent black treacle, which she served out of a big tin, and a few provisions. A small inn was attached to the house, known as the "Rose and Crown." Like Mrs. Grandy and Jane Chorlton, Sally Bridger only attended to her customers when it suited her. Such was the spirit of independence in those days. She had one very favourite saying, which was this: "There are two bad things to do in winter—to go to bed and to get up."

Bakehouses seem to have flourished in old Farnborough. Besides Dame Smith, Susan Smith, Mr. Cook and Mr. Gates, there was another baker in Farnborough Street, named Mr. Billing, whose successors in business were Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Fortescue, and Miss Wycherlow. This business was then taken by Mr. Chandler, and is now carried on by his son.

At the far end of Farnborough Street to-day the South Eastern Station is situated. This was opened in 1849. The railway brought great changes, and the quiet aspect of Farnborough was completely altered in 1854, when large tracts of land were bought up by the Government for military purposes. Wooden huts were quickly put up in various parts of South Farnborough, and some of these were replaced twenty years ago by the red brick buildings which now are called "The Lines." It was naturally an occasion for great enthusiasm to be shown in the village when the troops just back from the Crimean War arrived at the station. All the people in Farnborough Street turned out to welcome them, with pails of water for the thirsty troops, and thankful they were to get it.

We have peeped into Farnborough Street as it appeared sixty or seventy years ago. It was really a pretty little village, but in spite of the picturesque, if the whole truth must be told, it is to be confessed

it was not free from offences both to eyes and nose.

On either side of the roadway was an open ditch or drain, in which the sewage was often stagnant. Most people kept their pigs, and made a practice of letting them loose in the street for the day, whilst ducks and geese waddled about everywhere at their pleasure, and did not improve the sanitary conditions.

Farnborough folk, however, who had been born, bred and brought up in these conditions, were content and happy. "It always had been so in Farnborough"—that was argument enough to satisfy them, and accounted for the displeasure any suggested change gave them.

Chapter VII

CHRISTMAS OBSERVANCE.

The Christmas Festival has always been joyfully kept in the homes of Farnborough as elsewhere, but in bygone days there was more public excitement in the quiet village than there is at the present time. St. Thomas' Day marked the beginning of festivities, as on December 21st, the village benefaction known as "Parke's Charity" was distributed. Mr. Parke was a gentlemen who died in 1730. He left to the parish, lands between Hawley and Cove, the rents of which were to be shared out amongst the poor and needy Farnborough people who were not relieved from the rates. Those who wished to participate in this gift had to make their appeal to the Churchwardens and overseer of the parish, who met together at the church for this purpose.

The belfry in those days was used as the vestry; it was a cold and draughty place, and without any means of securing warmth. There sat the Churchwardens and Mr. Joyce, the overseer, in state, but shivering with cold; sometimes they were obliged to wrap themselves up in rugs to keep themselves warm. Each application was taken in turn. When the appeals had all been considered, the benefaction was divided among the successful applicants. At one time the charity amounted to as much as 5s. each, so it was well worth fetching, but as the population of Farnborough grew larger, the gift became of less value, and in the end only amounted to a shilling or so. This led to a great deal of grumbling and discontent.

There was one Churchwarden who did not at all appreciate this cold and lengthy business, so he decided to dole out a certain sum to each straight away, as the people applied for it, but that happy arrangement took place only once, as he was very much out of pocket at the end of the day.

Besides the Parke's Charity, some of the old inhabitants of Farnborough were allowed a certain quantity of turf every year for their firing. It came from the boggy heath land between Farnborough and Aldershot, and made a good fire. This was a great boon to many of the poor people in those days, when it was very difficult to procure coal. When, however, the Government bought this land they made a grant of coal to the parish as compensation for the loss of turf. This grant was called " Turbany," and the charity still continues, though the quantity of coal, owing to increased prices, has sadly diminished in late years.

Besides these public charities, the poor had much kindness shewn them. Those who lived in the big houses in Farnborough were most generous to their poorer neighbours, especially at Christmas.

Mr. and Mrs. Longman, the residents at Farnborough Hill, gave blankets and flannel petticoats to those in need, and there was also a generous distribution of other good things at their house at Christmas time. Each family received a joint of beef at the rate of one pound for husband and wife, and a pound for each child. A lunch of bread and cheese with home-brewed beer was given to those who fetched the gifts, and so this charity was a good deed well done. Entertainments, too, were given at Farnborough Hill at Christmas time, when everything was carried out in a very generous style.

Christmas was always observed in Farnborough Church as a very joyful festival, and the decorations were always seasonable. It was the duty of the sexton to look after the decorations then, and he knew just what to do because " it always had been done so " in

Farnborough. These decorations were very simple, and they were left in the Church till Candlemas. Holly and mistletoe abounded in the parish, and the little church looked quite warm, thickly clad in these decorations.

The choir-boys always seemed in good voice at Christmas time, and even the barrel organ surpassed its usual powers.

The approach of the Christmas festival was announced by the carollers. They went round the village from house to house, as the custom is still, but they did not in the good old times commence their business until Christmas week. Now the Christmas carollers are with us in November. On Christmas Eve there was a great deal of feasting with toast and ale, a kind of refreshment never taken at any other time in the year. Hot and well sugared, the ale was poured over the toast, and all, even the children, were expected to enjoy it.

As the master of the house managed the toast and ale, so the mistress generally produced her elderberry wine, home-made and spicy. When thoroughly heated, toast was dipped into it, and taken thus it was considered a pleasant and comforting forenoon drink. Old William Smith at the Street Farm, always liked the children to sing carols at his door very early on Christmas morning. When they had finished their carols, Mrs. Smith would ask them to come in, and would give them cake and elderberry wine. Such good things were rather a risky beginning for Christmas Day festivities, but they never seemed to upset the children, or damage their appetites for what came later.

Roast beef and plum pudding, and a gossip round the fire afterwards, was the general order of the day in most homes, when keeping the Christmas festival; but the villagers who were the fortunate owners of a pig, generally fattened it for Christmas; and a joint of pork and apple sauce would then form the main dish of the feast.

Mr. Chorlton, who was by profession "the village pig-sticker" had a busy time at this season, and perhaps three times in a week the pig-sticking would go on under the old pollard tree, in view of all beholders. Boxing Day was also kept with grand doings in Farnborough. On this day friends visited each other, and it was the day in the year for settling debts.

Seventy years ago the home Christmas tree had not been introduced into the village, but the Christmas mummers were well known. The mummers started their round of visits on Boxing Day, and kept them up for three consecutive nights, going round to all the larger houses in the district. Each evening they finished up their exhibitions at one or other of the three big houses; Farnborough Place, Farnborough Hill, or The Grange. When the show was over, they received their dole, and were entertained at supper in the servants' hall, and this was sometimes followed by a dance.

The mummers were mostly men from William Smith's pottery, and their Christmas rounds paid them well. It may be of some interest to tell more in detail of the doings of the mummers, as that form of Christmas amusement seems now to be quite passed away.

There were six mummers in the Farnborough party—Young Gates, Jack and Bob Russell, Fred and Bill Beck, and William Dickens. Great preparations were made beforehand for their display; They dressed themselves up in weird clothing, and were bedecked with white and coloured streamers. They coloured their faces, and disfigured themselves in every way possible. The start was generally made from Gates' house, where they put the finishing touches to their dress, and they had in attendance a half-witted lad named "Chitty."

Their musical instruments were a tambourine, a fiddle, a concertina, and bones. The characters in their play were Father Christmas, King George, a Turkish Knight, the Bull Slasher, Jolly Jack, and

the Doctor. When they approached a house they made a great noise, and Father Christmas was the first to enter, shouting :—

" The Mummers are out to-night,
Room ; room ; give us room to rhyme,
I'll show you some festivities this Christmas time.
After me there shall be shewn
The fiercest battle ever known,
Between King George and my two sons."

This was said amidst a great deal of shouting and noise.

As King George walks in, Father Christmas shouts :—

" In comes King George with courage bold."

Following on the heels of King George, enter the Turkish Knight, and the Bull Slasher, the two sons of Father Christmas.

King George then has a big tussle with them, saying :—

" To battle, to battle we will go
To see which on this ground will fall."

A great struggle follows, and the Turkish Knight, and the Bull Slasher are wounded. Father Christmas then calls in the Doctor, saying :—

" Is there a doctor to be found
To cure my two sons, who lie bleeding on the ground."

Then the Doctor applies his remedy called " Ache-pain," which was in a little bottle, saying :—

" A drop in the heart, and a drop on the eyes,
Arise, Arise, Open your eyes, and see what you can see."

Jolly Jack then enters with much bustle, carrying dolls on his back which represent his family, and says :—

" In comes Jolly Jack
With my wife and family on my back.
My family's large, my wife is small,
I think myself the best man of all."

Father Christmas then says contemptuously :—

" You think yourself the best man of all,
I think myself a better man than you."

Jolly Jack and Father Christmas then have a big fight from which Jolly Jack comes out victorious, saying :—

> " See, I have knocked Father Christmas down,
> Here I sit and take my ease."

Finally, Jolly Jack seats himself on the old man's back, saying :—

> " Ladies and gentlemen give me what you please."

This brought the entertainment to its close, and then the cap went round.

Mr. Longman and his family always enjoyed the mummer's show, and encouraged them to come to Farnborough Hill. The fight took place in the big entrance hall, and when it was over, the Misses Longman would come down in their evening gowns, and start a scramble for the mummers, throwing out amongst them, on the floor, sweets, oranges, and apples. At one time there were village dancers who went round at Christmas, eight men, and a fiddler, but they did not receive much encouragement, and their party soon broke up.

Some years ago the young men got together a set of hand-bells, and for awhile they were keen about them ; but this form of entertainment required so much practice, that it was not long maintained.

There was a good deal of skating about Farnborough in the winter time. The big pond in the Park opposite " Tumbledown Dick " was the scene of much merriment during a frosty season ; and people came from miles round to enjoy the sport there.

Many of the old-fashioned customs, and simple rejoicings have passed away, but Christmas in Farnborough is still a time of gladness, and " goodwill," and in the old Church, and in the homes of the people this great festival is duly honoured.

Chapter VIII

FEASTS AND FESTIVALS.

Christmas was not the only time of rejoicing in the ancient days of Farnborough, and we now have something to tell concerning other feasts, frolics, and festivals observed in the past by the villagers and still remembered by some. There were no cinemas, dancing halls, nor whist drives provided for the people seventy years ago. The children had but few story books, and fewer toys ; but ordinary village life in those days was by no means dull. Because the enjoyments were not of every day occurrence a great deal more was thought of them, when they did come, and the books were read and read again. The toys, such as they were, were the children's greatest treasures and much appreciated.

Neither old nor young were surfeited with pleasure in those days. People in Farnborough lived the simple life, and were for the most part quite satisfied with its simple pleasures.

The "Club Day," as it was called, was the great festival of the year in the village. The name came from the fact that on the day of the festivities the share out of the village club was the chief item of interest in the programme of entertainment. "The Club Day" generally fell in or about the first week in July. In more ancient times there was a cattle fair held in Farnborough on December 5th, but that fair had long been discontinued. The Club Day observance began in quite a small way. There were just a few little stalls put up beside the road leading to Farnborough Green ; but eventually it blossomed out into

a big event, with all accompaniments of a village fair ; Billy Matthews' father bringing to Farnborough Green all the wonderful paraphernalia of his show. Billy Matthews, who passed away not long since was young then and, dressed in his red shirt, came as one of his father's assistants. The roundabouts were not worked by steam in those days, but turned by a pony, who walked, or ran round, inside the circle of the wooden horses.

The Merry-go-round was much slower in its action than the modern ones but the pleasure it gave was just as great. There were swings of a kind, though not so exciting and luxurious as those we see nowadays, also aunt sallys, and coker-nut shies.

Little Joey Deakin was there too. He is still remembered by some in Farnborough. He was a quaint little dwarf who managed the roulette table. He came year after year with old Mr. Matthews, and did a good business with his table of chance.

He stood on a high stool behind his roulette table, and his call for customers was always the same.

" Even betting on the black,
Two to one on the red,
Five to one on the blue,
Eight to one on the yellow,
A shilling on the crown and feather,
Back 'em up gentlemen, Back 'em up ;
Play for pence, shillings, or pounds."

Both Billy Matthews, and Joey Deakin have their memorials in our cemetery.

There were stalls burdened with all kinds of " beautiful ornaments," as they were described, and pictures which were " works of art." Beads and lace could be obtained at very moderate prices. The stalls most patronised by the children had on them horses, birds, and elephants, and other wonderful figures, which were made of a treacley gingerbread mixture, never seen, and never tasted, on any other occasion ; but purchased by everybody on Club Day. There were fortune-telling and other mysterious shows.

It was a great day in Farnborough: Everybody went dressed out in their best, and to all appearances enjoyed the fun thoroughly.. At the close of the day the share out, followed by a supper, took place at "The Ship" Inn. To this feast all the members of the club, and a few outsiders, were invited. The entertainment was superintended by Mr. Allen, the proprietor of "The Ship" for many years, and his two daughters assisted him. In course of time the two ladies found the work connected with the supper too much for them, so it passed from "The Ship" to "The Prince of Wales." Eventually the club day lost its popularity, and this annual merry-making passed away.

The Ancient Order of Foresters also held an annual fete in the village in days gone by; and some old customs connected with it are very interesting. It was generally held during the first week in August. There was a big procession with band and banners, which left the Court House at ten o'clock, headed by Robin Hood, Friar Tuck, and Little John, who were dressed in Lincoln green coats, cocked hats, and high boots. All the members of the club were in their sashes and regalia. The procession included the Shepherds, who were led by Mr. Bartlett bearing a bale of wool on his back.

They first marched to the Parish Church, where a service was held, the band leading the singing, whilst the Foresters' banner was placed against the west gallery. The service over, they processed round the village, after which they had luncheon at the Court House, which was first at the "Swan" Hotel, and later at "Tumbledown Dick." In the afternoon there were sports, including a greasy pole, and Billy Matthews' attractions. These sports were held at one time in the grounds at Fir Grove. The last Foresters' fete held in the village took place on the ground where Mr. Dungay's house now stands.

Although it did not concern all the villagers the Harvest Supper was another very happy annual event

for many of the Farnborough people. The harvest supper has become an almost forgotten observance now in most country villages. This is to be regretted as it did much to foster good feeling between the master and his men. When the crops were all safely gathered in through common goodwill and hard work, it was indeed a pleasant custom for all those who had laboured together in the harvest to meet around their master's hospitable board, and enjoy the harvest supper. Such a harvest supper is described by Bloomfield in his ballad " The Horkey "—here are two verses :—

" And Farmer Cheerum went, goodman
And broached the Horkey beer
And such a lot of folk began,
To eat up our good cheer.
Says he, thank God for what's before us ;
That thus we meet agen.
The mingling voices, like a chorus
Joined cheerfully—' Amen.' "

The Rector of Farnborough was generally among the welcome guests at this feast. The supper consisted chiefly of the good produce of the farm, large joints, fruit tarts, home-made bread and cheese and home-brewed beer. After supper there were speeches, and then followed music and singing, and sometimes dancing. The party was generally kept up till a late hour. The labourers' wives came also to the supper, the maids from the big houses, and the farmer's children generally took their part in the evening's enjoyment. Farmer Smith was very hospitable, and entertained his men in good style, as did also Farmer Calloway.

The harvest supper best remembered in the village to-day was the one held at Farnborough Hill, where all the men working on the estate with their wives, and many others were invited at the end of harvest to partake of Mr. Longman's generous hospitality. The supper was held in the laundry, and a merry time was spent there. This party always ended with a dance.

The keeping of May Day was another great event in the village in olden times. The observance of May Day according to old custom has completely died out now, and its passing has robbed us of a very pleasing festival, which was generally popular, and particularly with children.

The preparation of the May Day garlands occupied the children for some time previous to May Day, for the decoration of the hoops for the garland, and the pole on which the garland was carried were works of art in which the youngsters were ambitious rivals. The parents, too were busy, for the pretty little cotton dresses had to be got ready, and there was the May Day hat or sun bonnet. The dolls were a great feature of the May Day garlands, and they had to be specially dressed for this occasion.

The garlands were finished on the eve of May Day, and quite early in the morning the pilgrimage began. The garland, enwreathing the dolls, and covered with a veil, was carried round the village by two little sisters or friends, a boy bearing the maypole walking behind them. From house to house they went, and until the door was opened, the children sang their song on the doorstep :—" To-day, to-day's the first of May : Please remember the maypole."

When the door was opened, the veil was lifted from the garland by the two little girls and it was exhibited with pride to all beholders, whilst the boy flourished his bedecked pole. Then the children passed on to the next cottage, their merriment growing as the little gifts increased their store. In days now long gone, when the evening came, the maypole was set up on the village green, and among the choruses sung by the villagers was this one :—

" The maypole is up
Now give me a cup.
I'll drink to the garlands around it ;
But first unto those
Whose hands did compose
The glory of flowers that crowned it."

Mr. Greene always encouraged the observance of May Day in Farnborough, and gave the children attending his schools a holiday. It was his custom to give two pence for the garland, and a penny for the maypole, but a second visit by the same party was strictly forbidden ; and a rod was in pickle for such as attempted it.

The fence round the old pollard tree was prettily decorated by the children in honour of May Day, and they danced round it, whilst the people from the big houses came down and smiled upon them, and further pleased them by distributing plenty of cakes and sweets. Here it was decided which of the children was Queen of the May, an honour coveted much among the girls of the village.

Jack-in-the-Green, being the village sweep enclosed in a portable framework of green boughs, used to figure in the Farnborough May Day festivities, but we never see him now, he evidently could not survive the passing of the May Day happiness of the children.

Another great event in the village was the school treat. This was held in the Rectory fields, and the tea was made in the Rectory kitchen. The gentry from the big houses provided the games and prizes for the children. When the population increased the children of both North and South Farnborough came together to the school treat, which was held in a larger field. It was almost a second " Club Day " in the village, for with it was combined a flower show, in which old and young were at liberty to take part. There were roundabouts and cokernut shies, and other attractions. It will not be out of place at this point to pay a passing tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Billy Matthews, who was buried with tokens of great respect in Farnborough Cemetery in February, 1922. He was a kind and generous man, and loved children ; and for their sakes made no charge for his attendance at the school treats. He generally came himself, wearing his red shirt, and had a pleasant word for everybody.

The children looked forward to and loved their festival; the parishioners always showed their interest by their attendance, and the competition in the flower show exhibits was always very keen, and excited a great deal of local interest.

At the annual Christmas school treat, the ladies from the big houses supplied all sorts of gifts, and a Christmas tree for the children. The Misses Longman took a great interest in this function and sometimes arranged and took part in simple theatricals for the amusement of the village people and the children.

Of course Guy Fawkes' Day was well observed in olden times by the Farnborough boys. The weird and frightful masks were sold at most of the little village shops. Jane Chorlton and Sally Bridger probably kept the largest stocks. There was a special liking for the black ones. The Boys donned strange and fantastic garments made of paper and rags.

"Remember, remember the Fifth of November gunpowder, treason, and plot;
I see no reason why gunpowder treason should ever be forgot.
A stick, and a stake for King George's sake, pray dame give us a faggot:
If you don't give us one, we'll take two;
The better for us, and the worse for you.
Holloa boys: Holloa boys: make the bells ring;
Holloa boys: Holloa boys: God save the King."

was sung with great gusto by the youngsters who went round disturbing the peace of the village as best they could. Nevertheless they came home with their pockets full of pennies as a result of it. They generally carried round with them an effigy of some well-known character in the village, which, when evening time came, they burnt with great excitement on the top of a big bonfire which was built on the Green, not far from where the South Eastern Station now stands. The last effigy burnt was that of a man named "White," generally known as "Buck White." There is some

skill required is stuffing an effigy which is intended to be burnt, and Buck White's effigy was stuffed too tightly, so that it remained unconsumed in the fire, much to the crowd's amusement, and particularly to his own, for Buck White himself was one of the spectators, and had foretold this would happen, so it was with real delight he went round muttering, "They won't burn poor old Buck after all."

Modern Farnborough has its up-to-date amusements, less boisterous, perhaps more intelligent, but from all we can hear the simple pleasures of seventy years ago were sources of unbounded joy to the villagers.

Chapter IX

SIGNS AND STORIES.

The old village of Farnborough was surrounded by wild heaths, dark commons, extensive woods, and forest lands. The simple villagers, unenlightened by modern education, and not a little superstitious, whispered to strangers weird stories and strange traditions of the past. Let me tell of some of them.

People in Farnborough seventy years ago told many tales connected with Dick Turpin, who was successively or simultaneously butcher's apprentice, cattle-lifter, smuggler, housebreaker, highway man, and thief. He was born at Hampstead, and died in 1739, but it is said that he had some headquarters not far away from Farnborough. Several stories were current of highway robberies committed by him in the neighbourhood; one of which happened at the gates of Farnborough Park.

A Spring-heeled-Jack was said to roam at large on the outskirts of the village, and terrible tales of his doings were no doubt related to the children to keep them within bounds. Poor children: I suppose they went to bed as soon as it was dark for they had little to read, and sewing and working samplers must have been done with the greatest difficulty considering the poor means the cottagers had of artificial light.

Tallow candles were quite luxuries in those days. Those who could not afford them got what light they could from peeled rush, gathered from the moors, and dipped in any grease their scanty means afforded. The rush was placed in an upright iron stand, with two spring holders on the top, which held the rush so tightly

that, unless moved, it went out when burnt to the spring. They were thus safe, and the people generally left the rush burning when they got into bed.

We are glad to remember that the children of old Farnborough had the fairies and the fairyland. Cockadobby Hill suggests all sorts of fairy tales. "Dobby" was an Old English name for a goblin; but a goblin was a malicious fairy, a vagabond from the society of the good fairyland. Such wicked sprites would naturally be found on the confines of the Great Park, which in olden days stretched from Windsor to our own neighbourhood.

Dancing fairies and elfish pixies abounded in Farnborough Park in the good old days. This was positively known by the large and small rings which were found by the children in the morning where the fairies had held their revels in the night.

There were two gibbets in the neighbourhood, standing beside the turnpike road; fearsome warnings to evil-doers. One of these was particularly associated with the punishment of a sailor named Will Davis. It stood on the left-hand side of the Bagshot Road; near to a place still called "Gibbet Lane." A local rhyme concerning this gruesome event ran as follows:—

> "To Bagshot Heath I did repair
> And saw Will Davis hanging there
> With a rustified, mystified, mustified air."

Another of these gibbets stood on the brow of the hill across the Canal at Frimley Green, on the right-hand side of the road.

A tale was told that a headless old woman was sometimes to be seen sitting on a gate in the Highgate Lane at night. In her lifetime she had been regarded as a witch by the village people, and her spirit was supposed occasionally to return to her old haunts. It is said that on one occasion a waggon and four horses remained for many hours in one place in the Highgate Lane, as

the horses saw and refused to pass the ghost of the old woman.

Other ghost stories connected with various places in the neighbourhood have been told me. No doubt they were village legends which had grown around some gruesome or startling fact which had happened in days long ago, and perhaps are better forgotten.

A terrifying event really happened in the neighbourhood about sixty years ago, which for a time made people very nervous. The Incumbent of Frimley was murdered by a robber. The burglar was a parishioner, and to escape punishment, he shot the Vicar dead with a marble, which the children of the Vicarage had left on the floor. The murderer was afterwards caught to the great relief of everybody, but the tragedy had alarmed the neighbourhood, and many people had shutters with bells attached fixed in their windows, some of which may be seen to-day. There was a happy sequel to this story, however, which ought not to be omitted. The Incumbent's widow had become so nervous through the tragedy, that later on she was persuaded to marry the detective who captured the burglar, to ensure herself against further troubles. We trust her nerves soon recovered in consequence.

Farnborough folks always were, and are to-day a very loyal people. The signs of the inns go to prove this fact.

Of late years there has been much doubt and speculation concerning the name given to the well-known old hostelry " Tumbledown Dick." Historically it holds a foremost place amongst the inns of this district. " Tumbledown Dick " is to-day a somewhat uncommon sign, and considerable difficulty is found in accounting for its origin. Some say the original inn was built by Henry the Eighth, and was so named to commemorate the downfall of Richard the Third, who fell in the Battle of Bosworth Field, 1485. Others say the sign refers to Dick Turpin, and his untimely end. There is a bedroom in the inn which was known in days

gone by as " Dick Turpin's Room," and it is said that he slept there on more than one occasion. But it is considered more probable that it was through the loyalty of Lord Anglesey that the sign " Tumbledown Dick " was introduced into the village.

Farnborough also had its " Royal Oak " which stood at the end of the road which is now called " Union Street." Both signs would probably date from the same period, *i.e.* the Restoration of King Charles the Second. " The Royal Oak " of course commemorated the wonderful escape of the King after the battle of Worcester, 1651 when he hid from his enemies for twenty-four hours among the leaves and branches of an oak tree at Boscobel; and " Tumbledown Dick " would recall the downfall of Cromwell's brother Richard; indeed, among the Loyalists of that time it was the invariable appellation of the Usurper who succeeded his brother Oliver, and was neither so clever nor so ambitious as he.

" Tumbledown Dick " has had many noted visitors in its time. Most of their names are now forgotten; but until the Tichborne Case is forgotten, the story of the lunch which Orton took at the old Inn will be remembered. On that event was based important evidence, and for that reason the Farnborough people of those days must have been keenly interested in the trial.

There is another old Inn still flourishing in Farnborough. It is now known as " The Ship," but originally it was called " The Royal Anne "; the name of the largest ship of the Navy in the time of James II. " The Royal Anne " became " The Royal George " later on when a larger ship was launched in the reign of George I. It is now called " The Ship," and its owners may be awaiting some further naval developments.

Another inn in Farnborough Street was called " The Rose and Crown." This was the badge of the Tudors. Turned into a private house some years ago, it does not now exist as a tavern. There was also " The Alma

Inn," whose name was changed to "The Imperial Arms" when the Empress took up her residence in Farnborough. A small inn along the turnpike road was called "The Star." It stood below where the Convent now stands, and "Star Hill" got its name from this Inn. A few old cottages still remain not far from Star Hill in the district which was called "Sycamore." In one of these lived old Mr. Wareham. He was the last Farnborough man to wear a smock. Like Old Six O'clock, he always had a leaf in his mouth. "The George" is of more recent date; but its title shows that the people of Farnborough in modern times still keep up the traditions of loyalty to the King. Other public establishments besides "The Rose and Crown" have changed in their character.

There is a small cottage covered with ivy on the right-hand side of the main road not far from Forest Lodge, which could tell an interesting tale if it could speak. That cottage was originally the Farnborough turnpike house, at which the toll was taken for the upkeep of the roads. The cottage with the turnpike gates in front of it, stood at first quite near to "Tumbledown Dick," and the gate was kept for many years by a man named Reeves. When the gates were removed, and the road made free of turnpike toll, the cottage was removed to where it now stands. The next turnpike gate stood on the other side of Frimley Bridge. In our days it is really quite difficult to imagine the old-world scene at the turnpike gate, the call to the gate keeper, the leisurely payments of the toll, and the friendly word of goodwill or reproach for vexatious delay. We live in another world.

In days gone by there was a Union House in Farnborough, called "The House of Industry." It served for Farnborough, Cove, Hawley, Yateley, Hartley Wintney, and Eversley. The building stood at the bottom of what is now known as "Union Street," which was originally named "Workhouse Lane." It had quite extensive grounds, in which the inmates grew their

own vegetables, and fed their own pigs. The matron was a Miss Marshall, a kindly soul we believe. When the Union was removed to Hartley Wintney, these buildings were altered, sold, and turned into a private residence, which is now called " Wilmot House."

There is another place of interest which must not be forgotten in our story. It is found in " The Hatches," near by the S.E.R. Station, on the property belonging to Farnborough Hill.

The Farnborough Hill property is in Hampshire, but the estate is actually on the boundary between Hampshire and Surrey. This being so, in the old prize-fighting days Farnborough and Frimley (the next parish) were favourite spots for these contests. The duties of the police were confined to their respective counties, and consequently if the arm of the law of one county presented itself during the fight, all that was necessary to avoid capture was to cross into the adjoining county.

For the great prize-fight that took place between Tom Sayers and Heenan in 1860, the ring was pitched in a hayfield belonging to the owner of Farnborough Hill, and we are told that such crowds of people came to see it, that the hay crop in the field was completely ruined.

Farnborough people were well aware that the struggle was about to take place, and warrants were made out to the Hampshire police. Shortly after the arrival of the train bearing the pugilists and their friends, at Farnborough Street Station, the Hampshire police arrived too, with the result that the ring which was being roped up on the Hampshire side of the Blackwater was moved to the Surrey side, where the police had no jurisdiction; there the fight commenced and ended. It was a great day for Farnborough and Tom Sayers. The actual scene of the fight was near the brook at the back of " The Ship." Two special belts were made for the combatants, at the charge of their

respective friends. The combat took place on April 17th, 1860. Tom Sayers was the unchallenged champion of England, and John Heenan, an American, was known as "The Benecia Boy." Sayers' right forearm was broken, but there was foul play on the part of Heenan and the fight resulted in a draw. It must have been a shocking sight, as no gloves were used.

It was no credit to Farnborough that that was not the only fight which took place in the village in those days.

Chapter X

OTHER SCRAPS.

A few other matters of interest connected with the past history of Farnborough call for brief notice.

From the fact that the sites of three ancient tumuli are found in the parish, it is not surprising that the discovery of antiquities has been made from time to time.

When the Rev. J. H. Clayton was living at the Old Rectory excavations were carried on in his garden among the laurel bushes beside Rectory Road, and an ancient urn, and other valuable pieces of broken pottery were found. At a depth of fifteen feet, were found the bones of an ape, also the skeletion of a stag, a quantity of ashes, and a valuable blue bead. All those excavated treasures went to the British Museum. This discovery was made when Mr. Greene was living at The Lodge. He was a great antiquarian, and was very interested in these findings, and the discovery led to the opening of the Tumulus at North Camp. But nothing of much account was found there. Before it was filled in again, however, samples of Farmer Smith's pots and pans, copies of "The Times," and coins of the realm, were buried, and are probably there to this day, to be discovered maybe in days to come, by antiquarians yet unborn, and looked on by them with wonder and interest, as relics of a long past age.

Other discoveries have been made, some comparatively recently. When digging in ground not far from Manor Farm, a few years ago, the workmen found a great many ancient coins, many of which are treasured still by the villagers.

The Parish Registers provide interesting reading for those who will take the trouble to decipher them. The early volumes are written on parchment, and they date back to 1584. Farnborough was then spelt "Farnborowe." Among the interesting items to be found there, we are told that in June 1700, a foundling was baptised in the Church, and had the name of "Farnborough" given him as his surname. There is also the record of his marriage as "Edmond Farnborough" 1729, and later the entries of the baptisms and marriages of his children. So the foundling apparently settled down happily in the village.

There are many recorded births and deaths connected with the Anglesey family, when Farnborough Place was one of their family residences.

Among the entries in the year 1780, we read of the marriage of the daughter of General Francis Grant of Farnborough Hill to Lord George Murray (second son of the third Duke of Athol). He became Bishop of St. David's, and a son of his was consecrated Bishop of Rochester. Burke's Peerage says that Miss Grant had been a lady-in-waiting to Queen Charlotte, so her wedding was probably a great event in the village.

Reference is made in the registers to the "King's Evil," a scrofulous complaint for which a touch from the King's hand was supposed to be the only cure. Amongst the Rector's duties of those days, was the issue of certificates to those who wished to avail themselves of the King's touch. There are interesting references to Church collections. Farnborough Churchpeople seem to have been ever ready to respond to "Church Briefs"—but ten shillings seems to have been considered a record offertory. Parishes which had suffered through storm or fire seem pretty frequently to have appealed for help. Briefs from Lisburn in Ireland, from Southwark, and from churches in Staffordshire, Lancashire, and other far-away places were responded to by the generosity of the Farnborough Churchpeople.

We fear it was not because "all men are brethren" that a black servant at one time was generally found in large households. That some black servants were kept at Farnborough, should probably be gathered from the record of the baptism of a Negro named "Edward Cambridge" on September 17th, 1781, and the burial of a black woman, named "Phillis," on March 12th, 1762.

In 1785 it became the custom to add to the name of the person buried, the age, and sometimes the cause of death; we find that about 1790, several villagers died of small-pox.

There is one very interesting entry of later times which ought not to be forgotten. It is dated November 21st, 1841. "George Augustus Selwyn, first Bishop of New Zealand, preached in this Church, in aid of the funds for erecting a Church on Green Hill, Cove."

There are some interesting accounts of Churchwardens and Overseers, but they only date back to 1726.

"Aaron Brown, 1797, received £1 0s. 9d., for repairing the seat round the elm tree." This record helps us to imagine the old tree in Farnborough Street as a resting place for the villagers, and cared for by those in authority.

The destruction of "Varment" was paid for by the Churchwardens. "To thirty-two hedgehogs 10s. 8d." "Eighty Dusen Birds' Heads £1." "Paid for Sparay Net 3s." Such entries give us a quaint aspect of the Church militant.

Vagabonds and rogues never seem to have been welcomed in Farnborough. An order for the punishment of them was read in Farnborough Church, June 8th, 1684. The Rev. John Gordon was rector then, but the order was read by "Will Rice, Clerke."

In 1728, it was resolved that nothing should be given to vagabonds; but there are many entries of help given to real travellers, and towards the expense of boarding out the old people.

An amusing story may be told here of tramps of a later date. Although possessing a very kind heart, Mr. Longman of Farnborough Hill was very fond of his privacy. He was much annoyed by the tramps who insisted on trespassing in his park. One day when he was sitting in his library two persons appearing to be tramps came along. He sternly waved them away. Then the tramps revealed themselves. They were two of his daughters disguised as tramps.

There existed an almshouse in the village once, but in 1796 this was sold by auction, and the money given towards the furnishing of the house of industry in Workhouse Lane.

Medical relief, such as was available, was provided out of Church funds. Here are two interesting entries from the vestry books: March 2nd, 1728, "Paid for curing Sarah's toe £1 1s. 0d." "To Goody Anthrup for curing a sore hand 7s. 6d." And in 1743, "To Mary Antrim for curing Widow Sellar's hand 4s. 0d."

In 1806, there was an extensive outbreak of smallpox, and Mr. Irish was paid 5s. a head for inoculating the poor.

From the vestry minute book it appears that the ladies of Farnborough made themselves useful in public work. When the chief duty of an overseer came to be the collection of a compulsory rate, it was difficult to fill the office, and so it was arranged that prominent householders should take it in turn, and we find acting as overseers in 1745, widow Elizabeth Parker; in 1795, Catherine Sophia Grant, widow of Lieut.-General Francis Grant of Farnborough Hill, and in 1834, Mary Foreman.

In those days Farnborough was not a populous place. The census in 1811 accounted for only 170 males, and 190 females.

Farnborough, in more recent times, had the distinction of giving the title to perhaps the shortest-lived peerage on record. Sir John Erskine May, Clerk to the House

of Commons, resigned that office in 1886, and was created Baron Farnborough, on May 10th; but he died on May 17th, so it was only a seven days' peerage.

The visits of Queen Victoria to Farnborough on her way to Aldershot, were of frequent occurrence when the L.S.W.R. line was opened, and there was a special siding at the station for the royal trains. These were great days in Farnborough. Compton, the "fly" driver, was requisitioned as one of the Queen's postillions, and very fine he looked in his white waistcoat, yellow breeches, and shining top boots. The Good Queen sometimes travelled in royal state from the station to the camp, when the road, which was very rough in those days, was carefully levelled and sanded; and decorations of all sorts adorned the way for the royal progress.

The Jubilee Hall now in such constant use is a lasting memorial of Her Majesty's reign, and of those good Victorian times; as is also the treble bell in the Church Tower, which was hung in the Jubilee Year by the people of Farnborough to show their loving loyalty to the Queen.

When Victoria the Good passed away, there was a widespread desire in the parish to erect some fitting memorial to her. It was finally decided to place a "Queen's Cross" in the centre of the Cemetery. The idea was quickly carried out, and the tall Iona Cross of grey stone was consecrated to her memory on September 24th, 1901.

The Cemetery Chapel after being thoroughly restored by the kindness of Miss Fielden in loving memory of General Sir Reginald Ramsey Gipps, G.C.B., Lady Gipps, and two sons, one of whom fell in the Great War, was dedicated as "The Chapel of the Resurrection." The cross on the altar is made of oak taken from a beam which formerly was above the entrance to the Chancel in the old Parish Church. The Chapel is carefully kept, and regularly used for a weekly service.

It is well to remember that the houses which crowd around the Cemetery to-day did not exist when the old Churchyard was closed.

There were no shops in Victoria Road in those days. Amongst Mr. Greene's many good works was the establishment of a most successful clothing club. This was for the benefit of the villagers in Farnborough and Cove.

Two shopkeepers, Hazell from Farnham, and Bessell from York Town supplied the goods. Each came alternately, from year to year. The goods were arranged in Mr. Greene's Schoolrooms, and were on show for a day or two, and when the sale was opened the people would purchase with their club money. The sale combined business with social pleasure, and Mr. Greene was always at the sale, which was much looked forward to from year to year.

In the days when there were few shops, there were no motors, and an interesting link with the old Coaching days is found imbedded now in the wall on the left hand side of the Rectory Road.

There is to be found in a horizontal position one of the old mile stones from the main road, which, when first placed in its present position formed the bottom step of the flight leading to Squire Morant's icehouse, in the sand-pit at the top of the hill. When the men cut the ice on "Tumbledown Dick" pond which was inside the Park, the drags carrying the ice had to go by the road, and turn in at the bottom of the lane, which involved a long climb to the icehouse. The workmen could then make a short cut across the Park, and up this flight of steps, of which one, the old milestone, still remains ; part of the information which it gave is still legible.

There is of course, much more forgotten than what is remembered of Farnborough's history. But enough is here jotted down, we hope, to show something of

Farnborough life and doings in the past. The story of any old English village would be most interesting if only it could be recalled.

NOTE.—It has afforded me much pleasure in collecting from many sources what I have here put together, and my hope is that at any rate some of my friends who look upon Farnborough as their "Sweet, Auburn, loveliest village of the plain!" may be glad to have these recollected items of the village story.

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